FREE THOUGHTS ON RELIGION, THE CHURCH, AND NATIONAL HAPPINESS.

By *B. M.*

The SECOND EDITION.

Revised, corrected, and enlarged, with many Additions by the Author.

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THE PREFACE.

EVIL Custom often fastens an odious signification on words that do not deserve it, and which in justice of speech cannot be used but in a good sense: so bigots, and the enemies of truth, would insinuate that Free Thoughts must be impious and atheistical, in the same manner as lewd debauchees by the words good-natur'd lady would have you understand a whore. That this bugbear has not frighten'd me, Reader, you see; but that it likewise may not deter you from perusing the following sheets, I shall keep you in no

ſuſpence, but in as few words, and as faſt as I can, acquaint you with the deſign and argument of them. The whole you will find divided into twelve chapters.

IN the firſt, I treat of religion in general, of deiſm and atheiſm, both ſpeculative and practical; of chriſtians, and to whom we ought not to deny that name. I demonſtrate, that what is commonly underſtood by faith and believing, is the eaſieſt part of chriſtianity, in which very few are defective; but that the moſt difficult part of our religion conſiſts in ſubduing our paſſions to the love of GOD, *and in obedience to his commands. I touch upon the wrong notions the vulgar have concerning theſe matters, as well as the degrees of offences committed to* GOD. *I ſpeak of ſin, and what makes an action ſuch. Laſtly, I prove from the main doctrine of the goſpel, that chriſtians, who are obſerving of their duty, cannot hate others upon any religious account whatever, and from thence draw a concluſion conducing to peace and mutual concord.*

IN

IN the ſecond, I urge ſtill further, that the worſt of ſinners ſeldom offend for want of faith, and endeavour to prove, that moſt chriſtians are convinced of their treſpaſſes, and a future ſtate; and that the wiſhes even of very wicked men are generally virtuous; but that the difficulty they meet with in the real amendment of the heart, being almoſt unſurmountable, they ſeek out for an equivalent to rid them of their fears; that this they find in the obſervance of ſome of the branches of outward piety and devotion in appearance, altogether foreign to real virtue; that men have all along been encouraged in this deluſion by prieſtcraft; and laſtly, that by relying too much on the efficacy of ſuch outward forms, they learn to remove thoſe terrible apprehenſions, which wickedneſs is ever accompany'd with, till they have deceived their conſciences into a perfect ignorance of themſelves. To render this important truth the more uſeful and conſpicuous to every reader, I have illuſtrated what I have ſaid in three very different characters, with which I conclude that chapter.

IN the third, rites and ceremonies are treated of, relating to publick worſhip, and ſome differences touch'd upon between our national church, and thoſe who diſſent from it. Throughout the whole, my aim is peace and union, and my only endeavour, if not to reconcile them, at leaſt to remove the ill opinion which the clergy on both ſides have taught them to entertain of one another, and which I demonſtrate to them, is much worſe than either of them deſerve. The reader will obſerve, that in my addreſſes to both parties, as I ſpeak to either, I am rather leaning on the ſide of their adverſaries, which I have done for no other reaſon, but that I thought it the duty of a man, who hopes for ſucceſs in a mediation between two enemies. I end with ſetting forth the benefit that will accrue to both parties from making uſe of the healing maxims I propoſe.

IN the fourth, I ſpeak of religious myſteries in general, and more particularly of the Trinity, ſhew the difference between knowledge and belief, and touch on the divinity of JESUS CHRIST, *and the* HOLY GHOST.

I deny

I deny nothing of what our church asserts concerning this mystery, nor yet judge uncharitably of others for refusing to comply with every syllable of the Athanasian *creed. I touch on the credulity of the ignorant, I dissuade from dogmatising in matters of faith, and the inhumanity of imposing upon one another creeds of human invention: Since the holy scripture must be the sole rule of faith, and every one at last must judge for himself. These sentiments I confirm with quotations from two eminent prelates of our church. I wind up all with a plain distinction between what is above reason, and what is against it; to convince of their errors, first, the vain and arrogant philosopher, who, puff'd up with his own sufficiency, has too narrow a thought of* God's *omnipotence, and rejects mysteries for no other reason, than that they surpass his understanding; secondly, the priest-ridden superstitious bigot, who shuts his eyes to common sense, and stupidly imagines, that he can believe plain contradictions.*

THE fifth, I open with a discourse on the will, and examine into the freedom of it: I touch upon predestination, and the grand ob-

ection that lies againſt it: I ſet down th ſyſtem of the two principles, dip into th controverſies concerning the origin of evil, and make remarks on ſeveral anſwers of the fathers to the Manichees, *and the argument of* Epicurus *againſt Providence. I ſhew on the one hand, that a ſuppoſition of the moſt abſolute free-will, ſuch as the* Socinians *hold, cannot ſolve the difficulty it ſhould remove; and on the other, how hard it is for a predeſtinarian, who has only natural reaſon to aſſiſt him, to avoid making* GOD *the author of ſin: from thence I conclude, that in the affair of free-will and predeſtination, one of the greateſt myſteries of the chriſtian religion is invelop'd, and therefore is a fitter ſubject for the exerciſe of humility and toleration, than it is for diſputes and animoſities. To corroborate this opinion I refer to St.* Paul, *who ſeems to aſſert predeſtination in the plaineſt, and ſtates the objection againſt it in the harſheſt, manner, without ſo much as endeavouring to anſwer it, or ſolving the difficulty any other way than by his humble reſignation to the unſearchable depth of the divine wiſdom. I exhort men to follow the example of the apoſtle, and ceaſe to contend*

for

for what neither party can demonſtrate, and leave off with a bright example of moderation, which I recommend to all clergymen.

IN the ſixth, I enquire into the cauſe of the affection and eſteem the vulgar have for temples abſtract from religion. I prove, that as their incapacity hinders them from being affected with true holineſs and ſpirituality, they are forc'd to transfer the reſpectful awe which their ſuperſtition fills them with, on things viſible, and ſuch as fall under the ſenſes, and that conſequently churches muſt be the chief object of their adoration. I ſpeak of the uſe that has been made of this frailty of the vulgar in all religions: I take notice of the various ſignifications of the word Church, and the benefit of knowing them. I touch on the miraculous manner after which the goſpel was propagated in the time of the apoſtles, and the different methods their ſucceſſors have made uſe of ſince. I illuſtrate the heroiſm of the clergy with ſeveral examples from hiſtory, that evidence the vaſt proweſs that has been expreſs'd, and the great hazards that have been run for the advancement of the temporal grandeur and authority

thority of the church; and lastly, I demonstrate that the protestant clergy have not discover'd less fondness for power and dominion, since the reformation, than the Roman *priests, whom they separated from chiefly upon that account.*

IN the seventh, I observe, that to get wealth, and raise the worldly greatness of the church, the policy of the clergy has not been inferiour to their courage. I speak of the wrong and impious use to which they perverted, for their own gain, what the gospel teaches concerning the soul's immortality, their zeal and inveteracy against human learning, in order to breed ignorance and superstition; their anger and indignation against those of their own profession, who at any time attempted to undeceive the people. I give examples of the church's strict adherence to her friends, and her inviolable esteem to those who promote her temporal interest; and her resentment, and the violence of her hatred against all, even the best of men, who question her authority, or touch upon the failings of the clergy. I relate what popes are requir'd to be, and give some

ſome inſtances to prove, that the cauſe of religion at Rome *is poſtpon'd to the temporal intereſt of the church; I mention other branches of prieſtcraft, pious frauds, calumnies and downright falſities, which the fathers, to promote the worldly grandeur of the church, have made uſe of in refuting the heathens, and conclude with a remarkable inſtance of inſincerity, which proteſtants have been guilty of in their controverſies againſt the papiſts.*

IN the eighth, I treat of ſchiſm, and the cauſe of it, and relate ſeveral extravagancies of ancient hereticks, and others, ſince the reformation: I hint at the nuiſances that were removed from the church by the reformation, and particularly the celibacy of the clergy, and I ſpeak of the ridiculous pretenſions to chaſtity that have been made by the church of Rome. *I aſſert, that theſe very nuiſances were the tools, by the help of which the church of* Rome *had triumph'd over all the ſchiſms and hereſies till the reformation, and that the proteſtant clergy, as ſoon as ſchiſms aroſe among themſelves, perceiv'd what they had parted with, were ſor-*

ry

ry for it, and have been labouring ever since to find out equivalents for what they loſt. I ſpeak of the diſſenters, and the quarrels of the proteſtant clergy with one another, and their averſion to a re-union, and thoſe who have endeavour'd to procure it; and I prove, from their own teſtimonies, how unfairly they have dealt with one another: I point at an eaſy remedy to prevent ſchiſms, or at leaſt the miſchiefs that are occaſioned by them, and end with the imputations and ſlander, which the orthodox and diſſenters in England *fling at each other.*

IN the ninth, I prove from the temper of the clergy, ſhewn in the foregoing chapter, that a ſchiſm once broach'd, is not to be cur'd but by death, baniſhment, and an utter extirpation of the ſchiſmaticks, and therefore plead for toleration, but aſſert, that the national church in every country is for perſecution. This I prove to be true by examples and quotations not only of the great ſticklers to the papal authority, and other Roman *catholicks, but likewiſe of the* Lutherans *and* Calviniſts, *and all clergymen, when oppos'd and in power. I prove, that national churches*

allow

llow no ſchiſmaticks to be ſincere in their pinions, whatever they ſuffer for it: That hoſe who have been perſecuted, as ſoon as heir ſect is uppermoſt, and they are able, reat others who differ from them, juſt as hey had been treated before themſelves; hat the reaſons and arguments for perſecu-ion, alledg'd by the proteſtants againſt the diſſenters, are not only the ſame as papiſts nade uſe of againſt the reformers, and the rthodox above a thouſand years ago againſt he hereticks, but likewiſe the ſame which he pagans uſed againſt the primitive church; and I give an inſtance, where a defender of he heathen faith, after a cruel perſecution, reated the chriſtians, and their religion, with as much pity and contempt, as the moſt haugh-y rigoriſt of the orthodox could the ſillieſt enthuſiaſt. I ſhew the inſignificancy of per-ſecuting by halves: I hint at the barbarity with which the goſpel has been propagated in America, *and the* Eaſt-Indies, *and or-thodoxy maintain'd in other places. All theſe I offer as arguments againſt perſecution, and point at a remedy to prevent the evils ap-prehended from an exceſſive toleration. I ſpeak of civil wars from religious quarrels,*

draw

draw a veil over our own misfortunes; and from the examples of calamities which others have ſuffer'd, I endeavour to deter the reader from the firſt approaches of what might lead to ſuch fatal times.

IN the tenth, I aſſert, that pre-eminence is due to the miniſtry of the goſpel above all other callings: that in the foregoing chapters I have ſaid nothing againſt the clergy to render them odious to the laity, and that the moſt eminent in other profeſſions are guilty of groſs failings, as deſtructive to their functions as thoſe I have charged the clergy with; that all things have a wrong ſide, and that we ought to diſtinguiſh between the intent of a calling, and what it may be perverted to. I prove, that in all profeſſions men make the moſt of their buſineſs for their own ends; that from our infancy we are taught to mind and take care of ourſelves; that if men are more encroaching in one profeſſion, than they are in another, it proceeds from nothing but their having a greater opportunity; and that men of all profeſſions would lord it over others if they could. I prove, that men in all employments boaſt of their

eir original, if it be to their advantage,
ough they are vaſtly degenerated, and act
om quite contrary principles. I prove at
rge, that after the time of the apoſtles, as
on as the miniſtry of the goſpel became a
rofeſſion that men were brought up to for a
velihood, the clergy have not been leſs guil-
y of frailties and vices, or poſſeſs'd with
ore real worth or real goodneſs than the
aity. From thence I infer, that the clergy
ught not to be more independent on the go-
ernment than the laity, or enjoy any privi-
ege or power to injure others with impu-
ity, more than is allow'd to men of other
rofeſſions; and I endeavour to refute what
s generally alledg'd againſt this aſſertion.
I inſiſt upon it, that this maxim of keeping
lergymen in due bounds of obedience, inter-
feres not with the veneration due to their
rder, or their enjoyment of worldly com-
forts equally with the laity, and give an
inſtance of good harmony and commendable
behaviour between the clergy and the laity.
I ſpeak of preaching, and the ſeveral ways
it is made deſtructive to the peace of the
ſociety. I give cautions to prevent the miſ-
chiefs that may be occaſioned by it. I de-

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tect the insincerity of several pretences and evasions often made use of by seditious preachers. I give an instance of a pious man, and one of the greatest reformers, who, led away by zeal or passion, preach'd a sermon that tended to sedition. I demonstrate, that to sow discord is a more heinous crime in a clergyman, than it is in any other, and remove the scruples that are made against punishing them. I conclude, with insisting upon it, that the two points I have chiefly urg'd in this chapter, are not inconsistent together, and illustrate my sentiments concerning our behaviour to the clergy, in a comparison which no reasonable man will be offended at.

IN the eleventh, I speak of government in general, and our constitution in particular. I assert, that no government can subsist, to which a passive obedience is not paid, and examine into the cause of our quarrels concerning that doctrine. I enquire into the supreme power, and whole soveraignty of the nation, and prove that our unlimited obedience is only due to commands given by the three estates jointly. I demonstrate, that the

the power to make laws muſt include a power of preſerving them from being violated with impunity; that a great ſhare of the ſoveraignty remains virtually in the people, and that the high prerogatives of the king interfere not with their liberties. I prove, that it is eaſy to know when the king breaks his contract with his people, and give reaſons, why a contract ratify'd between them ought to be no leſs binding to the one than it is to the other. I touch upon the ſucceſſion, and the divine right of kings, and ſhew the abſurdity of maintaining, that GOD *enjoyns us obedience to monarchy only with excluſion of all other forms of government. I ſtate two objections, the one againſt that ſhare of ſoveraignty which belongs to the people, the other againſt the validity of thoſe laws that have made an alteration in the ſucceſſion. To ſolve theſe, I take notice of the difference between later and former times, as to the ſituation of power among the three eſtates, which furniſhes me with arguments to anſwer the objections. I prove that the enemies to the preſent eſtabliſhment, are inconſiſtent in their complaints, and ſpeak of oaths, and ſwearing with mental*

reſervation. I enquire into the legitimacy of the Pretender, *and prove it to be doubtful at laſt: I ſet forth the conjuncture of time he was born in, and end with a character of king* William *the third, to whom we owe the ſucceſſion in the illuſtrious houſe of* Hanover.

IN the laſt chapter, I enumerate the native bleſſings of Great Britain, *eſpecially the ſouthern part of it, and reckon our laws and liberties to be the greateſt. I enquire into the reaſon of our diſcontents, and compare our murmurs and uneaſineſs to the complaints of thoſe who are afflicted with the ſpleen. I exhort to wiſdom, and define it. I ſpeak of courts, and the perſons they are generally compos'd of. I explode our partiality concerning miniſtries and ſtateſmen. I diſſuade men from relying too much on their honeſty on the one hand, and from miſconſtruing their actions on the other. I demonſtrate, that many of our complaints are unreaſonable, and that in ſome real grievances the evil is much inferior to our apprehenſions of it; that the expedient our malecontents wiſh for to redreſs them, is impracticable,*

practicable, without the ruin of half the nation, and that the very attempt to compass it must be attended with greater calamities, than can befall us under the present establishment. I touch on the Peerage-bill, *the war with* Spain, *and the keeping of* Gibraltar. *I set forth, what is required, as to religious matters, to procure peace and felicity to a nation. I hint at several sets of people, whose murmurings are not to be regarded, and conclude, that it is our own faults if we are not happy.*

THOSE who are vers'd in books will soon discover, that I have made great use of Monsieur Baile, *without mentioning him. I confess he is the learned man I speak of in* Page 102. *The citations likewise which I have borrow'd from that author, without naming him, are many. Particularly in the fifth chapter many arguments are in a manner transcribed from him. As he has taken more pains, and used more arts, than any other in these latter ages, in shewing what might be plausibly said for many heterodox opinions, I have in representing the difficulties which lie on both sides of the controver-*

ſies, conſulted my own eaſe ſo much, as to take many of the reaſonings as I find them in him, without giving myſelf the trouble to examine the ſolidity of them; and therefore, as I claim no credit from ſuch of them as are good, I deſire the reader not to look upon the other as mine, or that I adopt them or make myſelf reſponſible for them; tho' they are ſet down in the ſame manner as if they had been my own, many of them I think wrong; but it is enough to my purpoſe that ſo great a man thought them at leaſt plauſible; and I thought they would read better in the manner they now ſtand, than if I had ſtated them only as his opinions, which would have occaſioned many breaks in the diſcourſe. Had this been done out of vanity to compliment myſelf, or diſregard to the honour of that great man, I would have been wiſe enough not to have ſpoke of it now. The reaſons I had for doing as I have done, are more than one: In the firſt place, Monſieur Baile's *dictionary is not common, but among men who have great libraries, and quoting it would have ſignify'd little to the greateſt part of my readers. As to the truth of facts, which is the moſt material, the au-*

authors and evidences I quote, are the ſame as are in the dictionary, which, if I had referr'd to, the reader could have learn'd no more by ſearching after the authors there quoted, than what now he may do by looking before him, without any further trouble. Beſides, I imagin'd, that it would be unpleaſant, if not diſguſtful, to ſee the ſame name ſo often repeated in the notes, eſpecially to thoſe who are unacquainted with the vaſtneſs of that work.

I ſhall make no further apology for any part of the performance. I can ſee a great many faults in it, more than I know how to mend. Was it equal with the deſign, there would be but few better books in the world: as it is impoſſible I could have had any other aim but the common good, and the publick tranquillity, methinks I hear the candid reader ſay; What pity it is, a man with ſo good a deſign, ſhould not be better qualify'd! *This will never diſpleaſe me, and I envy not the men of brighter parts, and greater genius, their uncommon capacities, whilſt they are labouring to faſten calumnies on their adverſaries, conceal the evil actions and worſe*

worſe deſigns of their own party, and neglect no artifice to be gracefully diſingenuous.

WHAT I would vindicate, is not the ſtrength of my underſtanding, but the rectitude of my will. Had intereſt or vain glory influenc'd my labours, my pains might have been better beſtow'd than to ruſh between two enemies that hate every body who ſtrives to part them.

I well know the common fate of moderation; it neither procures you friends, nor appeaſes your enemies, and fixes a man as a mark to the two factions, that place themſelves in the oppoſite extream: but I have ſtill worſe to fear, conſidering the bold truths I have ſpoke; and many will wonder at my temerity, and ask, Who is it? Has he a great eſtate? What calling, or employment does he follow? Does he ever intend to thrive, or indeed to live? Is he piſtol-proof, and does he imagine, there are no daggers, nor no poiſon in the world? *I am not ignorant of the hazards I run; but what leſſens my apprehenſions is, that I can never ſuffer but from the unjuſt reſent-*

resentment of those, great part of whose du-
y consists in teaching others to have none.

AT all events I have performed a good action; *for when a man endeavours to pro-*mote *the interest and temporal felicity of the* nation *he lives in, without detriment to any* other, *or deviating from the path of virtue,* to *find out ways to heal our divisions, and* the *unhappy breaches of parties, without* injuring *any, by Remedies both easy and* pleasant, *that shall not only cost nothing, but* moreover *be a visible security to every man's* possession, *and heighten all manner of satis-*faction *a good man can wish for in the enjoy-*ment *of them.*

WHEN a man writes in defence of truth *and liberty, without offending* GOD, the *least injury to the civil power, or ill* manners *to superiours: when he speaks up* for, *and exhorts to true piety, with plain-*ness *and sincerity, without fiction or enthu-*siasm, *without slandering, or misrepresenting* even *the worst or the least shadow of flat-*tery *to any mortal: when by strengthening* the *authority of sovereigns, he strives to ba-*nish

niſh diſcord and animoſities from the ſociety, and recommend peace and union to all communions, as well as charity to all mankind: when a man is conſcious of all this, he may, without any prejudice to his modeſty, pronounce his work a good action, though it had no other good quality beſides. This is a thought he may reflect upon; he may pauſe, he may ruminate, and, after all, have the ſolid ſatisfaction, without flattering his performance, or entertaining romantick notions, to imagine and aſſure himſelf, that whilſt he is employ'd in the purſuit of ſuch ends, and dies in ſuch a cauſe, time cannot be better ſpent, nor life better loſt.

N. B. Tho' the additions and alterations of this ſecond edition are many and conſiderable, yet what is ſaid of *Gibraltar*, agrees exactly with the firſt that was printed in 1720.

TITLES

TITLES OF THE CHAPTERS.

CHAP. I. *On Religion.*

Chap. II. *Of outward Signs of Devotion.*

Chap. III. *Of Rites and Ceremonies in Divine Worſhip.*

Chap. IV. *Of Myſteries.*

Chap. V. *Of Free-will and Predeſtination.*

Chap. VI. *Of the Church.*

Chap. VII. *Of the Politicks of the Church.*

Chap. VIII. *Of Schism.*

Chap. IX. *Of Toleration and Persecution.*

Chap. X. *Of the Reciprocal Behaviour between the Clergy and Laity.*

Chap. XI. *Of Government.*

Chap. XII. *Of National Happiness.*

ERRATA.

PAGE 122. line 17. after *Thomists*, add *or*. p. 145. l. 14. for *such*, r. *inch*. p. 208. l. 2. for *injur'd*, r. *abjur'd*. p. 231. l. 8. r. *against*. p. 242. l. 2. dele *of*. p. 303. l. 9. for *private*, r. *publick*. p. 306. l. 6. dele the last *no*. p. 320. l. 7. r. *conjunctures*. p. ib. l. 18. r. *least*. p. 323. l. 6. after *all*, add *these*. p. 325. l. 23. after *takes* add *no*. p. 378. l. 22. r. *kings*. p. 395. l. 14. r. *have*.

Free-Thoughts, &c.

CHAP. I.

Of Religion.

RELIGION in general consists in an acknowledgment of an immortal power, that, superior to all earthly dominion, invisibly governs the world, and a respectful endeavour to discharge such duties, as every one shall apprehend to be requir'd of him by that immortal power. This definition comprehends whatever *Mahometans* or *Pagans*, as well

as *Jews* or *Chriſtians*, underſtand by the word *Religion*. I ſhall only addreſs my ſelf to the laſt of theſe, and ſay nothing, at leaſt in this chapter, than what ſhall be ſhort and plain, not leſs adapted to one part of the univerſal church than to any other, and no more than what the meaneſt chriſtian ought to be acquainted with. In the whole, I ſhall ſtudy to promote, what we ſtand moſt in need of, peace and charity; and by the way take notice of ſome truths, which, tho' unconteſted, yet few divines, of any ſect or perſuaſion, ſeem fond of informing us of.

OUR religion requires of us faith and good works: that is, the duties of a chriſtian are to believe the myſterious as well as the hiſtorical truths of the goſpel, and, by the aſſiſtance of GOD's ſpirit, to live up to the rules of it. I know very well, that that ſtrong confidence, entire truſt, and reliance, which a chriſtian ought to repoſe in the certainty of the ſacred oracles, are not comprehended in the idea, which the vulgar have, when they make uſe of the word faith or belief: it is by many look'd upon as a thing of choice, as if men could believe what

what they pleas'd, and ſeveral are perſuaded, that they believe what, on better examination will be found, they believe not, and this only for want of knowing what it really is *to believe.*

He who believes, in the common acceptation, that there is a God, and that the world is rul'd by providence, but has no faith in any thing reveal'd to us, is a deiſt; and he, who believes neither the one nor the other, is an atheiſt. Of theſe I don't believe there are many, and I would have no man ſo uncharitable as to think any man guilty of atheiſm, who does not openly profeſs it. Were we to judge of a man's belief, by ſtrictly examining into his actions, faith would be ſcarcer than can be eaſily imagin'd.

Whoever allows of the Old and New Teſtament, how differently ſoever from others he may conſtrue ſome paſſages of either, ſo he but believes the whole to be the word of God, ought to be call'd a chriſtian, even before he is baptized. We have many people in a year executed for enormous crimes, yet they are all deem'd chriſtians, tho' but bad ones, who by their e-

ducation were once look'd upon as ſuch, and profeſs not to disbelieve the things I mention'd; and therefore none ſhould be call'd atheiſts, unleſs by ſpeaking or writing they contradict or deny them. Atheiſts are either ſpeculative or practical; ſpeculative atheiſts are thoſe unhappy people, who, being too fond of knowledge or reaſoning, are firſt deluded into ſcepticiſm, till, unable to extricate themſelves from the mazes of philoſophy, they are at laſt betray'd into a disbelief of every thing they cannot comprehend, and become the moſt convincing evidences of the ſhallowneſs of human underſtanding. The number of theſe has always been very ſmall; and, as they are commonly ſtudious, peaceable men, the hurt they do to the publick is inconſiderable. To make this not appear a paradox, we are but to reflect on what it is men are govern'd by in the conduct of their lives, and we ſhall find, that very few act from the principles they profeſs, whilſt all the reſt are ſway'd by their paſſions and inclinations; and therefore it ought not to appear more ſtrange to us, that an atheiſt

ſhould

ſhould be a quiet moral man, than that a chriſtian ſhould lead a very wicked life.

PRACTICAL atheiſts are generally libertines, who firſt have been guilty of all manner of vice and profaneneſs, and afterwards, not daring to reflect on the enormity of their ſins, or the puniſhment they deſerve from the vengeance of heaven, lay hold on atheiſtical arguments, to skreen themſelves from their own fears, and only deny a GOD, becauſe they wiſh there was none. Practical atheiſts, as they commonly ſpend their lives in riot, and ridiculing every thing that is holy, generally dye (unleſs they happen to repent) in uncommon agonies and deſpair. Theſe deteſtable creatures, which no opulent nation ever was free from, will ſtop at no miſchief, and are generally produced from ſprightly youth, too careleſly look'd after in a liberal education, and it ſeldom happens that any of the meaner ignorant people are tainted with this impiety.

THE chriſtian world abounds with perſons wicked and prophane; but of real atheiſts there are fewer by much than is commonly imagin'd. The multitude in all

countries of the world, let their religion be what it will, are ſo generally and ſo powerfully influenced by fear and ſuperſtition, that atheiſm can never affect the bulk of the people. The belief of ſpirits, a devil, witchcraft, fortune, or any power above us, muſt always, if men will reaſon at all, include the belief of a firſt cauſe and ſupreme being.

To thoſe who were brought up *Jews*, *Mahometans* or *Pagans*, it may not be an eaſy matter to lay down their prejudice, and come over to our religion; and it is poſſible, that they may make a thouſand ſcruples before they can heartily embrace it, whilſt they are unaſſiſted with the divine grace; but a chriſtian by education finds no hard task in believing every thing contain'd in the goſpel, and what more has been taught him by tradition from his infancy. I would have it obſerv'd, that here the word *believing* is to be underſtood in the large ſenſe it is commonly receiv'd in; and then we ſhall find, that throughout the nation the chriſtian faith, according to the common acceptation, is that part of our religion, in which the generality of the people are

are the leaſt defective: if we enquire of thoſe, who attend the greateſt profligates in the laſt moments of life, even the *Ordinaries* of priſons, we ſhall hear but few complaints as to this point.

NOTHING is eaſier than *to believe*; men may be ſincere in their faith, and even zealous for the religion they profeſs, and at the ſame time lead wicked lives, and act quite contrary to their belief. Thoſe who chearfully ſuffer perſecution for their faith, ought not to be ſuſpected of inſincerity; yet in all ages there have been many inſtances of people, who, for their religion, left their country, their eſtates, employments, friends, and relations, but could never bring themſelves to renounce their ſenſual pleaſures.

Jovian the emperor, who ſucceeded *Julian*, was a chriſtian: the proofs he gave of his zeal to the goſpel, before he aſcended the throne, are indiſputable. In the firſt place, * he ſhewed himſelf very ready to renounce his poſt rather than his religion, when *Julian* commanded the officers of his troops to embrace paganiſm,

* Socrat. *lib.* 3. *c.* 22.

or reſign their employment. * In the ſecond place, he would not accept of the empire, till having declared, that he was a chriſtian, and that he would not command heathens, the ſoldiers had likewiſe declared, that they were chriſtians; † yet *Jovian* was a glutton, and ſhamefully addicted to wine and women. Behold a ſtanch chriſtian, who on the one hand was capable of preferring his religion to the *Roman* empire, and on the other immers'd in ſin and voluptuouſneſs!

THE greateſt difficulty of our religion is to live up to the rules of chriſtianity. To conquer our paſſions, and mortify our darling luſts, is, what few of us ſet about in earneſt; and as to higher and heroick virtues, they are very ſcarce to be met with. Who loves his enemies, or does good to them that hate him? how miſerable are the common notions of religious duties among us! The vulgar hardly know any heinous ſins, beſides murder, theft and adultery, and either ſinging, gaming, or

* Socrat. *lib.* 3. *c.* 22.

† Ammian. Marcellin. *lib.* 25.

working

working on a ſunday; and he, who is not guilty of any of them, and moreover abſtains from ſwearing, drunkenneſs, and Fornication, is counted virtuous; and, if he frequents any publick worſhip, ſhall be call'd a very ſober man and a good chriſtian; let him envy and back-bite his neighbours, be proud, uncharitable, covetous, and revengeful, as much as he pleaſes, and not be poſſeſs'd of one grain of real religion; whereas every body, that can but read and will examine the ſcriptures, may, without any other learning, or ſpiritual guide, be fully convinc'd, not from one or ten places in the goſpel, but the whole aim, drift and meaning of it, that all the rules of morality, and other duties incumbent on a chriſtian, are not to be perform'd for any worldly conſideration, or other reaſon, but the love of GOD and holineſs; and conſequently, that to judge from our actions, we ought to enquire into the motives that ſet us to work.

A young lady ſhall juſtly be call'd virtuous, whilſt ſhe expreſſes no immodeſty in her diſcourſe or behaviour, and withſtanding all the temptations of man, and the moſt

moſt powerful inclinations from within, keeps her honour and reputation unſpotted. But the ſame may be done by a heathen; and, unleſs we disbelieve all hiſtory, old *Pagan Rome* has had more women of try'd honour, and exalted virtue to boaſt of, than any country, ſince the coming of CHRIST. The fear of children, and the ſcandal of being counted a whore, often prove ſufficient guards to the moſt wicked and laſcivious women, and even ſuch, as without thoſe dangers would have hardly ſtay'd till the queſtion was ask'd them.

THOSE likewiſe of more refin'd notions, the women of education, rank and good ſenſe, even when by marriage they are ſhelter'd from ſome of the fears I mention'd, may often obſtinately defend their honour without being religious; when they conſider, that it is the richeſt Jewel they are poſſeſs'd of, a treaſure, with which, in the opinion of all men whoſe eſteem is valuable, no beauty, wit or fortune can come in competition; and that thoſe who are known to have loſt it, are deſpis'd by all the world, and ſeldom regarded, even by thoſe who have robb'd them of it.

BUT there is a vaſt difference between not committing an immorality from a principle of pride and prudence, and the avoiding of ſin for the love of GOD.

WHEN a woman poyſons her husband, and at the ſame time refuſes to proſtitute her ſelf, it will be difficult perhaps to dive into the principle ſhe is guided by; but it is very certain, that the love of GOD is not the motive of her continence; for had that any power over her, ſhe could not be guilty of ſo execrable a fact.

TO detect the frailties and evil diſpoſition of man's heart in general, never was counted to be cenſorious; and to give the leaſt handle to perſons to judge uncharitably of one another, is what I deteſt the moſt. My aim is to make men penetrate into their own conſciences, and by ſearching without flattery into the true motives of their actions, learn to know themſelves.

A ſingle man, we'll ſay, in the prime of his youth and ſtrength, when luſt is moſt raging, wholly abſtains from fornication. Would he know the motive of his forbearance, let him examine himſelf; and, if he finds that he curbs his inclinations, and mor-

mortifies his flesh to avoid sin, and because he is afraid of offending GOD, he may be satisfied that he acts from a good principle: but if he avoids lewd women, because they are expensive, and himself is covetous, or if he is with-held by the dread he has for some diseases, or the loss of his reputation, he has no reason to flatter himself, that his continence proceeds from any religious concern. This is not conquering the passions, but bartering one for another, and perhaps for two or three; for what he loses in the pleasures he might receive from lust, is repaid to him in pride, worldly interest, and the insurance of his health from that quarter.

A covetous man, who is made a sheriff, is obliged to be at greater expences, at least that year, than he has been used to, or else be laugh'd at or despis'd by every body; but this way of living proves him not more generous, or a better man. He only sacrifices a little of his avarice to a great deal of pride.

THE worldly interest of the whole society often interferes with the eternal welfare of every particular Member of it.

We daily ſee men rous'd from ſloth and idleneſs, and ſpurr'd on to emulation and uſeful labour, by no better principle than envy; and it is generally taken for granted, that covetouſneſs and pride are the chief promoters of trade and induſtry: but can it on the other hand be denied, that theſe vices, againſt which the goſpel ſo juſtly cautions us, contain the ſeeds of almoſt all the iniquities and diſorders that are committed?

LYING, ſlander, and revenge, as long as they produce no viſible miſchief to others, are generally look'd upon as peccadillos, and treſpaſſes of little moment; and yet it is certain, that there is no revelation nor ſolid reaſon, that can aſſure us, that they are always leſs heinous in the ſight of GOD than murder or adultery.

HOW often do we hear people own to us, in relating ſome of the paſſages of life, that they were forc'd to tell a lye; yet nothing is more evident from ſcripture, than that lying is a mortal ſin. How whimſical are our notions! it is hardly denied, but that every body is guilty of lying at one time or other, and yet to be up-

upbraided with it, is counted ſo ſcandalous, that whoever bears it with patience, is immediately by all the world condemned for a coward, without any further proceſs.

SLANDER and back-biting are made a jeſt of: among the faſhionable part of mankind this vice is treated as a piece of gallantry to ſhew one's wit, daily practiſed for the entertainment of both ſexes. The generality of the world looks upon it as an amuſement for idle people, ſo inoffenſive, that ſcandal and tea with equal indifference are ſpoke of as inſeparable companions.

WHEN a man threatens revenge on thoſe who have offended him, he is hardly blamed, if we are perſuaded that he has been highly injured. But how ſhocking would it be to hear him ſay, that he would venture eternal damnation for the pleaſure of his reſentment? and where's the difference? the meaning of the laſt expreſſion is included in the firſt.

THE great view of all governments in the adminiſtration of juſtice, is to ſecure every one's property and the publick peace, and

and to prevent any thing being tranſacted againſt the intereſt of the nation or country under their care. For this reaſon, the various puniſhments which human laws inflict on different crimes, are in moſt caſes proportioned to the prejudice they are of to the civil ſociety, or the viſible damage any of its members did or might ſuſtain by them. It is not the ſame with offences done to Almighty GOD; the leaſt of them, if we believe the goſpel, wilfully committed, makes us liable to eternal damnation, if we do not repent of it before we dye.

HOW trifling, or at leaſt how venial to human capacities would ſeem the ſin of *Adam*, ſhould we only conſider the act it ſelf, by which it was committed? yet how great has been the puniſhment, and how terrible the conſequences to himſelf and all his poſterity! nothing could be more innocent than the eating of an apple: there was no prejudice in it to human ſociety, or any of the creation; and the whole enormity of *Adam*'s crime was deriv'd from the bare prohibition.

WHAT

WHAT is a ſin therefore is ſuch, not as a miſchief upon earth, but an affront to heaven.

The chief duty then of real religion among chriſtians, conſiſts in the ſacrifice of the heart, and is a task of ſelf-denial to be perform'd with the utmoſt ſeverity againſt nature.

THE uſe I would make of what has been ſaid, is to put my reader in mind, that without this inward ſenſe of religion no outward worſhip, nor any act of ſeeming devotion or charity, can be of the leaſt ſervice to us, as to eternal ſalvation. That, as the doctrine of CHRIST plainly forbids malice, hatred and revenge, and every where exhorts us to meekneſs, patience, humility, peace and charity to all men, ſo a chriſtian, who is really ſuch, can never hate others upon any religious account, tho' they were *Mahometans* or *Pagans*.

THAT if we examine our ſelves, we ſhall find, that the generality of us are not poſſeſs'd with any great ſhare of this inward religion, and that, if we had more

of

of it, we ſhould love one another better than we do.

FROM all which we may eaſily conclude, that religion is not the cauſe of the unhappy breaches, that divide *Great Britain*; and that therefore all divines of what perſuaſion ſoever, who would inſinuate the contrary to us, and perverting the word of GOD, make a handle of it to breed quarrels and animoſities, or any way diſturb the publick peace, are evil teachers and ſeducers of the people.

CHAP. II.

Of Outward Signs of DEVOTION.

AS moſt men are worſe than they would ſeem to be, ſo again they are better, than from their actions, if we were acquainted with all, we would judge them to be; for, tho' the neglect of thoſe duties, which interfere with their paſſions, be almoſt general, yet it proceeds not, as ſome imagine, from want of faith, an averſion to religion, or an unwillingneſs to be good; but the unſurmountable difficulty they meet with, in ſtriving againſt nature, and conquering their inclinations, of which I have ſpoke in the aforegoing chapter. There are not many among us, who are not convinc'd that they daily do amiſs, and offend GOD, and who, when they have time to think and be ſerious, are not ſorry for it.

THERE is no chriſtian, ſome few profligate wretches excepted, but what will own to you, and really believes, that he is indebted to GOD, not only for his Being, but likewiſe for every good thing that happens to him, and all the benefits he enjoys in this life. Many, tho' otherwiſe wicked people, are really thankful for them in their hearts, whenever they have leiſure to reflect upon them; and moreover, are often looking out for commodious ways of ſhewing their gratitude; but as they can ſeldom find any that ſuit their conveniency, they content themſelves with hoping that they ſhall meet with them at one time or other.

MOST people believe ſincerely, that they ought to obey GOD's commands, and have often an apprehenſion, that they ſhall be puniſhed for the neglect of it. But then, if they are in health, a future ſtate is counted a great way off, and every body hopes to repent before he dies: beſides the aſſurance men have from the goſpel, that GOD is as merciful as he is juſt, is not always made uſe of the right way. Another proof, that men generally are perſuaded of the truth of the goſpel, is, that the duties

and ſeverities of the chriſtian religion ſeem ſo reaſonable to them, that they would abominate any one who ſhould preach up looſe morals; and there is hardly a drunkard, a whore-maſter, or any looſe jilt in town, if ever they go to any publick worſhip, but what would be ready to throw ſtones at a miniſter, who ſhould tell them, that their actions were commendable, and GOD approv'd of the life they led. The worſt of ſinners have their fits of devotion, and many of them will not only be very angry at a prophane jeſt, or hearing any thing ridicul'd they have a religious veneration for; but would likewiſe be deſirous to make an atonement to GOD for their crimes at any rate, except parting with their darling luſt.

CHRISTIANS then are not bad for want of faith, or of wiſhing to be good; but becauſe they are not able to overcome their appetites, and curb their paſſions, or rather have not reſolution enough to ſet about and perſevere in the attempt of it, whilſt they are unaſſiſted with the divine grace.

WHILST

WHILST this incapacity on the one hand makes them look on their real duty as an impoſſibility, and their faith on the other repreſents to them the risk they run of eternal damnation, they endeavour to find out ſome equivalent, which may rid them of their fears: like lazy ſchool-boys they'll do any thing to avoid the rod, but their task. This has been the ſource of all the bigotry and ſuperſtition of *Rome*: hence have been derived all ridiculous penances, prayers for the dead, indulgences for the living, powers to releaſe ſouls from purgatory, and whatever could be impos'd on ignorance and credulity, by the craft and avarice of a deſigning clergy, who, in removing the terrors of deluded conſciences for money, have acted the part of knaviſh uſhers, when they take bribes for conniving at the neglects of the ſcholars.

THOSE of them who have been the moſt artful, and dived the furtheſt into our nature, have been always moſt remiſs in promoting an inward ſenſe of religion, and ſhewing us our real duty, but left no ſtone unturned to encreaſe our faith, and en-

encourage ſhews of outward devotion. Firſt, they made people believe, that all their neglects, all their ſins and offences proceeded only from want of faith; whereas believing too much was one of their greateſt failings. After that, all the demonſtration they required of their faith conſiſted in acts of outward devotion, and they always proportioned the ſeverity of diſcipline to the capacity and humour of their devotees. A preciſe bigot ſhall be forced with fifty laſhes to expiate a ſin, which a wild debauchee ſhall atone for with three *Pater-noſters*, or half a dozen *Ave-maries*. The jeſuits are, of all prieſts, the eaſieſt caſuiſts; for which reaſon the confeſſors of princes, and people of the higheſt quality, who refuſe to be teazed with troubleſome penances, are all fathers of that order.

By what has been ſaid, I have endeavoured to lay open the firſt cauſe of the diſregard, the generality of chriſtians have always had for the amendment of the heart, and of the mighty ſtreſs they have laid at the ſame time on acts of outward devotion, beyond what they deſerved. My

next

ext buſineſs ſhall be to demonſtrate, that his perverſeneſs of judgment ſtill continues mong us, even thoſe who pretend to e the greateſt enemies to ſuperſtition; which to perform, I ſhall find ſufficient roof from one act of outward devotion I hall inſtance in.

CHRISTIANS are commanded to meet nd join together in divine worſhip: therefore going to church is a neceſſary duty; but it can make no atonement for the neglect of other duties equally neceſſary, even when performed from a principle of piety and devotion, much leſs when comply'd with out of cuſtom, or when made ſerviceable to a worſe intention. There are abundance of idle people of both ſexes, who are daily puzzled in contriving how to ſpend their time: of theſe ſome go conſtantly to Prayers both forenoon and afternoon. They do very well, no body blames them for it, but why ſhould they make a merit of it, when they are conſcious, that were they not to go, it would be more troubleſome, and they would not know what to do with that hour?

THOSE

THOSE who go to church as they ſhould do, go with an intent to amend their lives, and become more perfect in all chriſtian virtues, otherwiſe the action it ſelf is indifferent, and all the good to be done at church depends on the motive of coming thither, and the uſe that is made of it. He who goes to church every day for twenty years together, and perſiſts in a wicked courſe of life, or any one habitual ſin he is hardened in, is not a better chriſtian than the man who never goes there at all.

GREAT numbers of young people, of both ſexes, are conſtantly to be ſeen at church, whoſe chief end in going thither is to diſplay their finery, and indulge their pride, and perhaps the hopes of raiſing a more ſhameful paſſion in others. To the vaineſt and moſt laſcivious of theſe the church is often the place they take the greateſt delight in, becauſe they can no where have a better opportunity of ſetting themſelves off, to each other, to the beſt advantage, and thouſands of them go to ſee and be ſeen. Would you diſcover the truth of this, have but patience till by the ne-

neglect of the ſempſtreſs, the mantua-maker, or the taylor, or ſome other accident or misfortune they are diſappointed in any of their accoutrements, and are obliged either to ſtay at home, or appear in a dreſs, by which their vanity might ſuffer, or at leaſt not be ſufficiently flatter'd, and you ſhall find, that rather than go to church, they'll ſtay at home for a fortnight.

THE worſt and moſt profligate of the mob, and ſuch as are wholly deſtitute of all goodneſs and morality, may likewiſe be drawn to church by the unchriſtian zeal and licentiouſneſs of divines. Theſe are the truſty ſatellites that follow in ſhoals, and ſurround the firebrands of each party. To hear others rail'd at, and their betters revil'd, is the height of their pleaſure; and therefore, when men are loaded with curſes, and worried with invectives by a favourite miniſter, and damnations are with clamours denounc'd from the pulpit, why ſhould a bull-baiting, where men are often expos'd to danger themſelves, be more approv'd of than a Sermon, of which they are ſure all the miſchief will fall on their adverſaries only; or the church,

where they are ſheltered from the weather, not be preferr'd to a bear-garden, where they can but have the ſame diverſion, and muſt ſtand in the rain, or be choak'd with the duſt?

A man need not be very cenſorious, who will allow no great merit in the going to church of theſe wretches; yet it is remarkable, that often, when they are tranſported with joy at the violence of voice and geſture, by which they are inſpired with a mortal hatred againſt thoſe of a different opinion, many of them are ſo ſtupidly ignorant of their own condition, as to imagine that they are diſcharging a chriſtian duty, whilſt they are wholly employed in gratifying the malice and rancour of their hearts.

It would be endleſs to give all the inſtances, by which one might prove, that moſt men relying too much on forms and outward devotion, place a merit in things that have none. For this reaſon, I ſhall ſay nothing of keeping the ſabbath, almsgiving, and other duties, that might be referr'd to this head; but in the remainder of this chapter, preſent the reader with two or

or three characters, which I believe will help to confirm what hitherto I have aſſerted. As to the rites and ceremonies of outward worſhip, too rigidly inſiſted on by ſome, and too peeviſhly rejected by others; they are one of the chief cauſes of our inteſtine quarrels, and for that reaſon ſhall be ſpoke of by themſelves at large hereafter.

HORATIO was apprentice to a creditable tradeſman, and but nineteen years old, when he was married to a young beautiful creature, with a tolerable fortune, who was a neighbour's daughter fal'n in love with him. He had always been a diligent youth, and the beſt ſervant his maſter ever had; who pardoning this fault, gave him up his indentures, and *Horatio* was ſet up for himſelf before he was twenty. He had not been married much above three years, when his wife died of a conſumption; having often miſcarried, but never had a child born alive. In leſs than half a year after, *Horatio* took another, who was a hale country laſs, juſt turn'd of fifteen, and brought him a very good portion. This had no children before ſhe was three and

twenty, but ſince that, they have had one almoſt every year, and two or three times twins. She is now with child, and lay in about ſeven months ago. He has a ſincere love for her, and ſhe is a very prudent woman. The ſmall-pox has veen very fatal to their children; and of twenty they had born alive, but nine are left, ſix ſons and three daughters. *Horatio*, who is now fifty one, has alway been an induſtrious thriving man, and maintain'd his family in plenty. He has never been drunk, always kept orderly hours; he is belov'd by his neighbours, and has the character of a very good humour'd man. He is a ſtrict church-man, keeps all the faſts in the year, and never eats meat on a *friday*. All laſt *Lent* he abſtain'd from fleſh and wine, and kept the *holy week* with ſtill a more extraordinary Rigour.

HORATIO never had receiv'd the leaſt blemiſh in his reputation, when, on *Eaſter-ſunday*, whilſt he was gone to church with his family, all in new cloaths, the impertinent curioſity of a ſervant, that was left at home, made a diſcovery very much to his diſadvantage. As *Horatio* was al-

ways

ways very mindful when he chang'd his cloaths, to remember his letter-caſe, his money, and whatever he had about him; ſo now in dreſſing himſelf, he had taken every thing out of the coat and breeches he pull'd off the night before, and had, to the beſt of his thinking, very carefully examin'd every where; but, as ill-luck would have it, forgot to feel in, what he very ſeldom made uſe of, the left pocket of the waſte-coat, where he had put two letters to keep them ſafe, and not mix them with other papers. In the one was a bill from a farmer in *Surrey*, who had the care of two baſtard children of *Horatio*'s; the other was a ſcrawl of a miſtreſs that was ready to lye in. Theſe were found out by his cook-maid, as ſhe was rummaging in his bed-chamber. The maid had malice enough to ſhew them her miſtreſs, who, having read about a third part of one of them, and asked her, how ſhe came by them, folded it up again; and without looking in the other, put them both into the ſame pocket they had been taken out of. The next day ſhe turn'd away the cook, but with abundance of good humour; and,

having paid what was due to her, made her a preſent of three guineas, on a promiſe of ſecrecy, which ſhe earneſtly required of her. The wife has never ſince open'd her lips, nor ſhew'd the leaſt chagrin about the letter; but the wench has broke her word, and the thing is known, tho' not publickly.

NOT long ago a worthy divine, who is a particular friend of *Horatio*'s, and has a great value for him, hinted it to him with all the caution and good manners imaginable. *Horatio* own'd all, and prevented the reproofs he expected, by going on thus. The frailty of the fleſh is one, I have hitherto not been able to conquer; but never was guilty of taking unlawful pleaſures, but when my wife was in child-bed, or otherwiſe out of order, and no man has more love or friendſhip for a woman, than I have for her. I have examin'd my ſelf on this head, continued he, very ſeverely, and am well aſſured, that if it be a ſin, it will be forgiven me; but on our friendſhip let me hear no more of it.

HO-

HORATIO is a man of ſenſe, and has been an impartial arbitrator in fifty diſputes of other people: is it not ſtrange, that a ſtrong inclination ſhould ſo violently over-power a man's reaſon, as at laſt, againſt his will, to corrupt his judgment? For, let *Horatio* have his ſurety from what part ſoever he pleaſes, I am ſtill more ſure, he has it not from the goſpel; and that himſelf is a notorious ſinner, and has not one chriſtian virtue to boaſt of.

IT is wrong always to judge of man's inclinations from the ſins he is guilty of. Princes may neither be cruel nor covetous in their temper, even when they are the cauſe of war, of rapine, and devaſtation; their ambition blinds them, or makes them overlook the ſteps, on which it mounts. Private perſons are betray'd into wickedneſs after the ſame manner, and men often commit ſins with reluctancy, and conſent with regret, to what their darling vice forces them to ſubmit.

EMILIA had a great ſhare of wit and beauty, but pride enough to outweigh both: ſhe was every way well accompliſh'd, and her diſcretion hid the greateſt part of

her frailty: ſhe hated all female acquaintance, and yet ſhew'd no fondneſs to man: ſhe was a pattern of modeſty, and remain'd virtuous, till ſhe was five and twenty; at which time, her father, who was a merchant, dying inſolvent, *Emilia* was left deſtitute to the wide world. Two months after ſhe grants the laſt favour to a *Jew*, and gets five hundred pounds by the bargain. She ſoon diſcards him, admits another, and abates of her price. She had ſix gallants in leſs than a month; and in half a year's time, *Emilia* became a common miſs of the town. As ſhe was a well-bred woman, that never drank to exceſs, and guilty of no other crimes beſides proſtitution, ſhe had a very good income, and no rakiſh cuſtomers; being expenſive in nothing but cloaths and furniture, ſhe hoarded up money. All the women of her profeſſion hated her, and ſhe them more inveterately. At three and thirty ſhe had a fit of ſickneſs, which alter'd her much for the worſe; upon which, finding her trade to fall off, ſhe left it, and retir'd with five thouſand pounds in her pocket. She went a hundred miles off, changed her name,

and

and was married to an old knight, who had little or nothing, and ſpent her above half of what ſhe had.

HER husband has been dead theſe two years, and *Emilia* is now turn'd of fifty. She is grave in her dreſs, and ſolemn in her gate: She has left off houſe-keeping, lives within compaſs, and, with her woman and foot-boy, boards in a very ſober family. She appears very devout, is never abſent from prayers, and has for ſome years read nothing but divinity; ſhe delights in controverſy, and is well verſed in eccleſiaſtical hiſtory, and ſo good a diſputant, that, all around her, there is no body able to cope with her. Since ſhe left her firſt employ, ſhe has not been guilty of one act of incontinence; but as ſhe commits no fault her ſelf that way, ſhe is reſolved not to connive at the leaſt ſhadow of it in others. She talks very well, and paſſes not a day without telling lies, either of her birth and family, or elſe the virtues of her youth. She never had a child; and the hatred to her ſex, eſpecially thoſe of merit, continues. She is the moſt cenſorious woman in the world; and, in the ſeventeen years

ſhe has been in the country, ſhe has broke off above twenty matches, that, in all probability, would have been happy ones, and ruin'd above fifty reputations, that never deſerved it; yet ſhe is ſo circumſpect, as well as ſly in her inſinuations, and manages her ſlander with ſo much dexterity, that ſhe has never been openly detected.

EMILIA is fam'd both for wiſdom and piety; the parſon of the pariſh extols her to the skies, but is afraid of her in his heart; every body admires and ſtands in awe of her, and no woman in the county has more reſpect paid her. Half a year ago ſhe made her will, and left every farthing ſhe has to rebuild the front of a little alms-houſe, that has a very little income, and ſtands about a mile off from where ſhe lives. Over the porch is to be her effigy in ſtone, with an inſcription of her own indicting underneath it. Since ſhe has had this deſign, ſhe often viſits the poor inhabitants, to whom ſhe gives what charity ſhe can ſpare, and who, in return, take her to be a ſaint, and trumpet her praiſe all over the country.

WHAT

WHAT *Emilia* thinks of her ſelf is worth any man's notice. Her proſtitution ſhe is ſure never proceeded from luſt, but neceſſity, *ergo* no ſin. The miſchief ſhe does with her ſlander, ſhe aſcribes to the averſion ſhe has to vice. When ſhe reflects on the hours ſhe ſpends at church, and in reading, and then thinks on the will ſhe has made, ſhe flatters her ſelf with having perform'd every chriſtian duty, and her conſcience is entirely clear. Is it not ſtrange, that *Emilia*, with all her cunning, never ſuſpected her ſelf to be an ill woman, and knows not to this hour, that envy and vanity are her darling vices?

HYPOCRISY every body knows is a fair outſide, put on to hide deformities within, deſignedly to cheat and circumvent others: but when men are as good, as unaſſiſted with the divine grace it is in their power to be, and not bad in any thing, but what interferes with their leading paſſion; what muſt we ſay of them, when outwardly they appear upright, and yet their hearts are very corrupt from that one ſin, which, in ſpight of all their fears and wiſhes, over-rules them? for it is

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unjuſt to call people hypocrites, when they ſet out with no ill deſign, and by their fair appearance deceive themſelves more, ten to one, than they can do others of any tolerable experience. What I ſay will be better illuſtrated by the following example.

CRATO is a rich miſer, who has no real value for any thing but money: he is humble in his dreſs, and frugal in his diet; he rails at the vices of the age, and the luxury of the times. He thinks no virtue more commendable than induſtry, and is a mortal enemy to beggars. Uſury and extortion he knows very well to be great ſins in a chriſtian, neither does he affirm, that he is not guilty of them ſometimes, but he hopes GOD will forgive him, and wiſhes he could withdraw his heart from this wicked world more than he does. He never drinks wine, or any thing that is ſtrong; and no hermit ever practis'd greater auſterity. If you talk to him of religion, he liſts up his eyes, and owns to you that he is a great ſinner: what is moſt wonderful, he does it with ſincerity, with tears in his eyes, and a bitter Sigh at almoſt

moſt every word. In the mean time he is peeviſh to his wife, ill-natur'd to his children, a ſharper in his dealings, a litigious neighbour, and has never a friend in the world. Cathedral worſhip he calls popery, and the ſurplice is the garment of the whore of *Babylon*: he turns pale at the ſound of an organ, and no *Roman Catholick* can have more ſuperſtition in keeping of holy-days, than he diſcovers in affecting to neglect them.

He is a rigid obſerver of the ſabbath, never fails of hearing two long ſermons every *ſunday*, and hardly eats any thing before ſupper. He never takes nor ſuffers any of his family to take the leaſt, even the moſt harmleſs recreation that day. What time he has upon his hands is ſpent in reading the ſcripture, or ſome other book of devotion, or elſe ſitting ſtill without any other exerciſe, but looking pitifully, and yawning at firſt, and towards the evening, nodding and ſtarting by turns, without ſpeaking a word. After ſupper he ſings a pſalm, ſays his prayers, and goes to bed the moſt contented man alive, and, by his own conceit, often throws himſelf into

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an enthuſiaſm of joy, which the ſilly wretch believes to be an infallible token of heavenly favour, and miſconſtrues as a reward to his ſoul for the good life he leads. This keeping of the ſabbath, he imagines, atones for all; for tho' no man is more afraid of hellfire than himſelf, and all the week long he deceives and over-reaches as much as he can, without incurring any penalty of the law; yet he flatters himſelf, that the outward devotion of one day in ſeven, and his abſtinence from every thing his avarice will not let him enjoy, will balance all accounts.

SOME time ago having paſs'd the *ſunday*, as uſually, came to him the next morning a petty tradeſman for ten pounds, that had been due ſeveral months; his wife was ready to lye in, and he knew not where to get a farthing any where elſe. *Crato* anſwers him very calmly, that he could never have come in a worſe time; that he had not half that ſum in the houſe; that he ſhould be forc'd to borrow money himſelf that very day, to pay in at the bank, and that all the directors were rogues. The poor man begs and prays, and tells him,

him, that he never was in greater neceſſity in his life; but all in vain. *Crato*, who has no compaſſion, but upon his own caſh, and knew the other valued his cuſtom, and would not dare to diſoblige him, puts off his dun for a fortnight longer, and in leſs than two hours after, lets an extravagant rake have five hundred pounds at twenty *per cent.*

He never was heard to ſwear an oath, but has more than once hir'd knights of the poſt, and brib'd a lawyer to ruin an orphan. He is conſcious of his tranſgreſſions, but ſays they are human frailties, and that no man is free from ſin: after that he knowingly and wilfully repeats the ſame over again, and ſo has done for near forty years, without ever having endeavoured, or ſo much as reſolved to amend; yet *Crato* is generally counted a very religious man, and every ſtep his avarice makes, is by many attributed to the ſeverity of his morals.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

Of Rites and Ceremonies in DIVINE WORSHIP.

THAT the difficulty there is in conquering our paſſions, is the greateſt obſtacle to chriſtian virtue, has been ſufficiently proved in the two foregoing chapters. Another reaſon, why the generality of men are ſo little affected with inward religion, is, that the vulgar, and all people of mean capacities, can find nothing in it that ſuits them. It is wholly ſpiritual, and there is nothing ſtrikes the ſenſes. In the time of our Saviour and his diſciples, the wonders that were daily wrought to the aſtoniſhment of all who beheld them, were ſufficient to awaken the attention even of careleſsneſs and ſtupidity it ſelf; but when miracles were ceaſed, the influences of the holy Spirit, which had been ſo openly manifeſted

in the actions as well as doctrine of the apoſtles, and render'd the divinity of their miſſion almoſt indiſputable, were never after ſo eminently viſible in their ſucceſſors; which was the reaſon that the charms of the goſpel did not work ſo irreſiſtibly on the minds of the ſenſual, the illiterate, and men of groſs underſtanding, as they had done before; and the fervent zeal of proſelytes began to cool in many after the firſt century.

THE chriſtians before *Conſtantine the Great*, throughout the empire, were every where ſurrounded with the gawdy ſhew and pompous ceremonies of triumphant paganiſm. The wealth and skill laid out in their idols and temples; the mirth and luxury of their feaſts; the ſolemnity of their ſacrifice, and ſtatelineſs of their proceſſions, were very attractive to vulgar eyes. If to theſe we add the rich and ſpotleſs garments, as well as venerable aſpects of their prieſts, their ſubordination and variety, and the awfulneſs of their office, we ſhall conclude, that the pagan idolatry muſt have had a great influence over the weak minds of poor and ignorant people,

when they ſaw it ſubmitted to by princes and emperors themſelves.

THE heathen prieſts at firſt deſpiſed and ridicul'd the chriſtian religion, and for ſome time after contented themſelves with cruſhing it by the ſecular power; but when they found that in ſpight of all perſecutions, it ſtill got more ground, and began to be embraced by many ſenators, and people of great quality, they thought their temples in danger, and had recourſe to reaſonings and remonſtrances; but not being able to maintain their own theology, they drew in philoſophers and orators to defend it, as their country's cauſe.

THUS chriſtianity came to be attacked in form, its doctrine cenſur'd, and the whole oppoſed by popular arguments, which the *Roman* catholicks have ſince made uſe of in the diſputes with the proteſtants, and have not been forgot by the church of *England* againſt diſſenters, and have ſtill receiv'd the ſame anſwer from the adverſaries of the national church, which ſome of the primitive chriſtians made to them at firſt.

As

As many learned men had embraced chriſtianity, and their cauſe was far the better, the pagans were generally defeated by them; yet their claſhings together were of a long continuance. And it is likely, that whilſt the pagan prieſts left no ſtone unturned to maintain their own, the government being likewiſe on their ſide, the pious churchmen of thoſe times, who were not willing, that the ſpreading of the name of CHRIST ſhould be retarded by any neglect of theirs, were of opinion, that faith and piety might be aſſiſted by outward circumſtances of devotion, and therefore introduced ſeveral comely ceremonies and decorations into their worſhip, which they had no precept for from the goſpel; thinking themſelves obliged, in behalf of the vulgar, to join ſome outward ſhew to their good reaſoning; as the heathens, who had always truſted to the pomp and ſplendour of their religion, and never been uſed to ſpeak in defence of their theology, now condeſcended to enter into debate with them, and join reaſoning to their outward ſhew.

ON

ON this mean foundation of ſome few inoffenſive rites and ornaments the pride and avarice of the ſucceeding clergy, as they encreaſed in power, and emperors became chriſtians, have built all the luxurious machinery of the Roman-catholick ſuperſtition. How ſoon chriſtians began to deviate from the primitive ſimplicity of their worſhip, is not eaſily determin'd; but we have reaſon to think, that it was very early; becauſe it is evident from *Prudentius*, that they had already images in ſome of their churches in the beginning of the fourth century, or before.

WHATEVER *has an outward appearance of piety*, ſays a learned man, *and may be obſerved without having any virtue in the ſoul, was always eaſily entertain'd among ignorant nations, who on the contrary did always neglect whatever requires ſome virtue to be practiced.* This truth has been always profoundly underſtood by the prieſts of moſt countries, and the uſe to be made of it to their benefit been ſo eminently improved among the chriſtians, that their clergy in the city of *Rome* has in lux, and religious pageantry, at leaſt equalled

their

their heathen predeceſſors, but far exceeded them in their arrogant (not to call them worſe) pretenſions to holineſs, power, and authority.

LONG in the moſt haughty manner had the *Roman* clergy, the empire of the eaſt being deſtroyed, maintain'd an abſolute ſway over the conſciences of ſovereigns, as well as ſubjects in all the chriſtian world; till their own flagrant vices and the contentions among themſelves were the occaſion, that many of the better ſort of them proteſted againſt the tyranny of *Rome*, and at laſt, by the help of ſecular powers, brought to paſs what we call the reformation; by which ſeveral kingdoms, of which *England* was the chief, and other ſtates and principalities in *Germany*, *Switzerland*, and the *Low Countries*, withdrew themſelves from the uſurpation of the *Roman* high-prieſt.

THE great deſign then in hand, or at leaſt the chief pretence was to remove all objects of idolatry from churches, and other publick places, to aboliſh all ſuperſtitious ceremonies, and other abuſes that were crept into the church. This was executed in every country with more or leſs

rigour,

rigour, according to the heat or moderation of the guides and leaders they followed.

I ſhall take no notice of what was done abroad, or of our own relapſe in the reign of queen *Mary*, but deſire every body to take a view of what lies before him, and impartially to conſider the rites and ceremonies in general, that cannot be proved to be of apoſtolick inſtitution, and which yet the *Engliſh* divines, together with the government, have retain'd, or alter'd into ſuch, as are made uſe of in our church, as by law eſtabliſhed.

I beg the reader's pardon for leading him ſo far about; but I could not better, to my mind, ſet in a true light the innocent original, prodigious increaſe, and reaſonable curtailing of ceremonies, and the changing them into thoſe we have now, than the way I have done it in. And as my great aim is national concord and the publick tranquillity, the uſe I would make of ſuch a view is this,

I would on one hand ſhew the diſſenters, that the motive of inventing ſome rites and ceremonies may be pious and laudable;

able; and that the end of the reforma-
on was not to deſtroy uſeful order and
ecency, but idolatry and ſuperſtition, and
hatever, by a covetous and ambitious
lergy, had been calculated to exhauſt and
nſlave the laity. From hence I would
ake an opportunity of obſerving to them,
hat no rites or ceremonies inſiſted on by
he church of *England* could be excepted
gainſt on thoſe heads. And ſhould they
sk me why other proteſtant countries made
ot uſe of the ſame, I would anſwer what
have partly hinted at already, that the
eal and violence with which the *Roman*
atholick religion was proceeded againſt in
ll countries, that are now proteſtant, chief-
y depended on the temper and inſinua-
ions of the firſt reformers they hearken'd
o; and that it is evident that ſeveral of
hem, tho' otherwiſe men of learning and
reat qualifications, were too much led a-
way by human paſſion, and that many of
heir actions had not ſo much diſcovered
he influence of the Holy Ghoſt, as that
of a reſtleſs and vindictive ſpirit.

I would tell them likewiſe, that at the
time of the reformation, the known me-
thod,

thod, commonly uſed to make a crooked ſtick ſtrait, had been over-ſtrain'd, and practis'd with too general an application: and that in thoſe days the zeal of proteſtants had been ſo blind, as in many caſes to take away not only their charity, but likewiſe their underſtanding. To prove which, and not ſpend too much time in running through particulars, it will be ſufficient to take into conſideration only one inſtance of the anti-zeal, and extravagance of the reformers.

CHRIST died on a croſs; with this, jews and infidels, in the firſt ages, have often upbraided his followers; who on the contrary glory'd in it, and no good chriſtian ever yet was aſham'd to own the ignominious death of his Lord and Maſter. In tract of time the croſs became the banner and enſign of chriſtianity. Of this veneration, which was juſtly given to the ſign of the croſs, in remembrance of our Saviour's ſufferings, deſinging prieſts made an ill uſe. By virtue of it, they pretended to cure diſeaſes, exorciſe and perform ſeveral other miracles. This ſoon made that every thing had the ſign of the croſs upon

upon it, or was made in that ſhape; and few things were wore, or made uſe of, that had not the figure of it expreſſed, either in painting, ſculpture, or embroidery. Several eccleſiaſticks pretended to have parts of the real croſs which our Saviour ſuffer'd upon, and ſold in ſmall and bigger pieces more of it, than would fill half a dozen firſt rate men of war. They openly paid adoration to it, wherever they ſaw it, and made others do the ſame. In ſhort, they made it the chief engine of idolatry and ſuperſtition, in all their trade.

THIS was a ſad and wicked abuſe of a thing otherwiſe indifferent; but was this a juſt cauſe of the horror and deteſtation ſome of the reformers inſpired their followers with againſt the ſign of the croſs? this was another extreme. Amongſt the proteſtants, either in *Switzerland*, or the ſeven provinces, there is not a croſs, nor a crucifix to be found in any family; and wherever you ſee the picture of either, you will not err once in fifty times, if you pronounce the people to be papiſts. Is not this folly? but was it not much more mad-

neſs in the firſt reformers to break and deſtroy every thing that had a croſs or crucifix upon it, or was made in reſemblance of it? would it not be an odd way of paying reſpect to the memory of a prince, if we ſhould demoliſh his ſtatues, or cut his pictures in pieces wherever we met with them?

I cannot leave off yet. Does their averſion proceed from the reflection on the uſe the papiſts put it to? why can't they as well conſider, that this was one of the reaſons why they parted from their communion; and that now they have left them they have no more to do with them as to divine worſhip, than they have with the jews, or the pagans? What is this to the croſs? no body bids them make it an object of idolatry, neither do I bid them make any croſſes, or the reſemblance of it. People may hate onions and not be able to give a reaſon for it; but I ſhould think him a mad-man, who ſhould have a real averſion to them, upon the account of the *Ægyptians* of old, who paid idolatrous worſhip to them. A man of any family, that has a coat of arms to boaſt of, has it painted

painted on his coach in many places, and can't have a ſilver ſpoon but what bears the creſt upon it; and ſhall a chriſtian hate the reſemblance of a Chriſt crucify'd, and either tremble at the ſight of, or elſe ſpurn from him what is the emblem of his redemption?

THE ſame reflection I would have men make on the greateſt part of the liturgy and the common-prayer. I would have them conſider, that in all great enmities, each party, for fear of bordering too near upon the other, precipitates it ſelf to the oppoſite extreme, and very often with little judgment. The papiſts had innumerable ceremonies, many of them really offenſive and ſinful; therefore the exceſſive zeal of moſt proteſtants made them imagine, that there could be no thorough reformation, if they retain'd any thing their adverſaries did or ſaid, how harmleſs or becoming ſoever. This may be obſerved in the very dawn of chriſtianity; tho' I think they carry it too far who are of opinion, that the altering of the chriſtian ſabbath, and ſhifting it from *Saturday* to *Sunday*, was more owing to an antipathy againſt the jews,

and a fondneſs of differing from them in as many things as it was poſſible, than the reaſons that are commonly given for that change.

AFTER this, I would ſhew our diſſenters, that they were more rigid anti-papiſts than any calviniſts abroad; for that the proteſtants in *Holland*, &c. tho' they have thrown by the maſs-book, and the prayers of the church of *Rome*, ſhew no averſion to ſet forms of prayers; that in the ſeven provinces they have forms of them adapted to the ceremonies both of baptiſm and marriage; and that the miniſters of the national church, not only make uſe of a certain form of prayer, compos'd by order of the government, before their ſermons, but are likewiſe obliged to conclude all their prayers, their own extemporary ones not excepted, with that of our Lord.

NEITHER would I forget to tell them, that all proteſtants beyond the ſeas, allow of godfathers and godmothers; witneſs king *William*, who had the ſtates *ge-*

neral and others † for his godfathers: nor, that they make uſe of inſtrumental muſick in divine worſhip; that throughout the provinces they have organs wherever they can afford them, and thoſe in the new church at *Amſterdam*, by good judges, are counted the beſt in the world.

WHAT I have ſaid, (which I am ſorry I could not do in fewer words) I would have the diſſenters ſeriouſly to conſider, and pick out of it an anſwer themſelves.

FURTHER I would beg leave to ask a rich presbyterian, why there is as much gaudineſs and ſuperfluity in dreſs to be ſeen at their meeting-houſes, as in any of our churches? if he pleads the modes in being, and the faſhion of the country for himſelf, why does he affect ſingularity in the habit of his teachers? if the laity of a nation differ from each other in opinion, and yet wear the ſame cloaths, and conſult nothing in their dreſs but the modes

† *The others were the ſtates of* Holland, *thoſe of* Zealand, *together with the magiſtrates of* Delft, Haerlem, *and* Amſterdam. Aytzema, *Herſtelde Leeuw.*

in being; why ſhould the diſſenting clergy ſtand out, and not all follow in their habits the faſhion of the ſame country?

BUT ſhould he refuſe to admit of any difference in dreſs, between the clergy and the laity; then, why muſt their miniſters wear black, and not as well ſky colour or ſcarlet? to anſwer this, he'll fly to decency, and muſt at laſt be obliged to appeal to the cuſtom of the country, which at the ſame time he refuſes to comply with.

I would ask him moreover, why, if he affected the primitive ſimplicity of chriſtians, he ridicul'd the quakers? for they in their worſhip, as to outward appearance, keep up a greater reſemblance of the apoſtolick times, than any other ſect of chriſtians. Tho' many of theſe likewiſe, I am afraid, miſtake affectation for a chriſtian virtue; and being part of our diſſenters, I have ſomething to ſay to them in particular as to ceremonies.

I would firſt entreat them not to think better of themſelves than they do of other people, before they had well examin'd whether they deſerve it; and put them in mind that to be purer in outward wor-

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ſhip would avail but little, unleſs the heart was leſs corrupt. After that I would tell them, that the plainneſs and ſeeming humility, in which they differ'd from others, was the eaſieſt thing in the world, when acquired by education, and made habitual by cuſtom. That the houſe-keeping of a quaker was generally as expenſive as that of a churchman, of the ſame fortune; that many of them eat and drank, and wore the beſt of every thing, were curious in their furniture, magnificent in their buildings, and extravagant in their entertainments, and every thing about them.

I could go further, and affirm to them, that a quaker might have a greater guard upon his words and actions, and yet as to himſelf, not be a better man than a perſon of looſer morals; that, when a man ſtrenuouſly aſſerts a thing, his honour engages him to ſtick to it; and that the more pride he has, the leſs he'll recede from the principle he pretends to be of; for ſhould once a vain man, brag of being leſs chilly than others, he would keep from the fire as long as he could, whilſt he thought himſelf obſerv'd.

I would likewiſe ask them, whether, while they are diſtinguiſhing themſelves from others, they are always conſiſtent with their principles? for a man, who refuſes to pay reſpect to the civil magiſtrate, ought not to require, much leſs exact it, from his coachman, and every ſervant he keeps. I would ask a man of ſenſe and probity, as a great many of them are, how he could pretend to renounce the pomp and vanity of the world beyond others, and have nothing elſe to ſhew for it, but keeping on his hat, and the ſcantineſs of his coat? for, that theſe two, and uſing the ſingular number inſtead of the plural, in their addreſs to others, are all the characteriſticks many of them are to be known by, is undeniable. I would conclude with this queſtion, how he could imagine that the voluptuous enjoyment of eaſe and luxury could be aton'd for by the pitiful ſacrifice of a yard of cloth, and perhaps half a ſcore of buttons in every ſuit he wears; whilſt his wife and daughters put in above three times the quantity of ſilk, of what, twenty years ago, the ſame garment would have been thought to require.

THIS is the uſe I would make of what I have ſaid on ceremonies, in relation to diſſenters, and I would ſpeak with the ſame plainneſs to thoſe of our national church.

I would urge to them, that all ceremonies in uſe amongſt chriſtians, even the moſt decent and the leaſt liable to cenſure, muſt be own'd to be of human invention, and that we had none we could with any certainty call apoſtolical; that as our church pretends to no infallibility, we ought not to be too dogmatical and poſitive, in defending every part of the rites and ceremonies of it: That in my remonſtrance to diſſenters, I had been favourable to our church; but elſe, that we had ſeveral ceremonies and uſages not to be inſiſted on: nay, that we had retain'd what the church of *Rome* it ſelf had borrowed from paganiſm; I would not adviſe any proteſtant to juſtify this, as cardinal *Baronius* does; who having confeſs'd the feaſt of *candlemaſs* to be entirely pagan in its original, adds; *the like has often happen'd, ſeveral other gentile ſuperſtitions being laudably introduced into the church, and expiated and ſanctified by*

by the chriſtian uſage. Nor as ſome others have done, by ſaying, that adopting the uſages of paganiſm, is employing the ſpoils of *Egypt* to adorn the jewiſh tabernacle; that it is following the example of *Solomon*, who borrowed the materials and builders of the temple of the true GOD from an idolatrous king: that *David* ſcrupled not to ſet the crown of gold on his own head, which he tore from that of the idol *Milcom.*

SUCH juſtifications I would deſire them not to lay great ſtreſs upon, and tell them further, that ſtanding to the eaſt at the confeſſion of our faith, and bowing to the altar might be omitted without any great loſs: that bowing at the name of JESUS, and not at that of CHRIST, is a childiſh interpretation of the text it is deriv'd from; and that thoſe ſticklers for the letter, who inſiſt upon the performance of that rite, might without any great cunning perceive, if they would, that it is only comply'd with in ſtrictneſs by the women. That the ſtated fees, which, beſides their tithes and ordinary income, our clergy can demand for marrying, baptizing, burying, *Eaſter* offe-

offerings, *&c.* bore an air of popery to thoſe, who are not accuſtomed to the uſages of our church, and that, even by good men, they might eaſily be miſtaken for relicts of prieſtcraft.

I would inform them, that many things might in themſelves not be really ſuperſtitious, and yet men be guilty of ſuperſtition in the uſe of them, by laying too great a ſtreſs upon, and paying a more ſacred veneration to them than they deſerve. If he ſhould own to me his weakneſs, that nothing could raiſe his devotion equally to good muſick, I would commend him for preferring cathedral worſhip to any other; but I would not juſtify his anger againſt his neighbour, becauſe he is diſturb'd at the ſight of a choriſter, whom he knows to be a lewd companion, that lets out his voice for every purpoſe it can be hired for; ſings anthems one hour, and obſcenities the next, and in the ſame afternoon ſerves the church of GOD, and the playhouſe.

I would allow, that the looſe becoming garment of white linen the prieſt is clad with at divine ſervice, may, as an emblem

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of innocence and purity, be of uſe to put the wearer in mind of what he ſhould be, and as ſuch be edifying to the people; nay, I would grant, that the ſight of the ſurplice ought to have no other effect on a candid beholder: but I would have no body judge uncharitably of a man who ſhould deny, that the dreſſes of the dean and chapter, the diverſity of hoods, caps and cawls, with all the variety of veſtments at ſome ſolemnities to be ſeen at a cathedral, either all together, or part of them, had any thing in them more holy or more neceſſary than the gowns of the judges, the ſword-bearers cap of maintenance, or the habits of the yeomen of the guards; and conſequently would look upon them no otherwiſe than men uſed to do upon all odd faſhions retain'd from old cuſtom.

I would deſire him to examine himſelf, and the force of education, and put him in mind of the proverb of the new veſſel, which will long retain the ſmell it was once imbued with. That it was not of yeſterday the people they quarrell'd with began to diſſent from us; that as our animoſities were the fruits of the diſputes

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and contentions of our forefathers, the diſſenters had from their infancy been inſpired with horror againſt many things which in reality are indifferent, and which we from the ſame cauſe have been taught as early to over-value; and that if we found it difficult to conquer the prejudices of education, we ought not to propoſe it as an eaſy task to others.

THUS I would ſpeak to thoſe of our own church, and conclude with this admonition: if the diſſenters are deluded, let us ſhew that we are wiſer. Is the continuance of their ſeparation obſtinacy in them, let us avoid the ſame imputation, by not urging the diſpute any further. If to err belongs to human frailty, let us bear with their errors, and for the future reſolve to treat them with humanity; and begin with three things that ought to be eaſy to a chriſtian: let us forbear calling names, aſcribing ſentiments to them, which they utterly diſown, and laying to the charge of any of them, what they have not been perſonally guilty of themſelves.

THE more one really conſiders the difference between a churchman and a preſbyterian,

byterian, the more eaſy it ſeems to heal the ſore, if thoſe who are entruſted with the cure, would throw by their corroſives, and but ceaſe to keep open the wounds with ſo much induſtry and application. Let me illuſtrate this with an example.

A churchman receives the ſacrament kneeling, a presbyterian ſitting. Let us ſuppoſe, that out of curioſity they would ſee the manner, after which it is adminiſtred in each other's communion. There is no doubt, but ſuch a ſight would be very ſhocking to both. Now, (ſays the churchman) I ſee that theſe wretches are not only ſlovenly and diſreſpectful in their worſhip, but likewiſe place a religion in affronting GOD, and prophaning every thing that is holy, or elſe how could they chuſe the moſt irreverend and ſcandalouſly familiar Poſture that can be invented, to take the Lord's ſupper in. This is his conſtruction.

THE presbyterian ſeeing every body upon their knees, cries out, idolatry! theſe people, ſays he, believe in tranſubſtantiation, or elſe they would never worſhip the creature: this is popery all over; and I

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am ſure they adore the bread as much as the papiſts do the wafer. At this rate they muſt never be reconcil'd; but how ſtrangely it would alter the caſe, if each of them would calmly hearken to what the other had to ſay in his juſtification!

THE presbyterian would ſay, that the goſpel was the ſtandard of his worſhip, and that he could not find that CHRIST or his diſciples at the firſt inſtitution of the Lord's ſupper, made uſe of any other poſture than that uſual at meals; that in imitation of this, as far as was conſiſtent with good ſenſe, he took the ſacrament ſitting, becauſe that is the poſture uſed at meals in the country, and the time he lives in; as much as among other nations, it was formerly the cuſtom to eat and drink half lying down, and half leaning on couches. This is a very good plea for ſitting down; but the reaſon the churchman would give for kneeling, is as weighty to the full.

I do not believe (would he ſay) the real preſence more than your ſelf; but look upon the partaking of the Lord's ſupper, to be, of all the chriſtian rites, the moſt ſacred;

cred; it fills me at once with thoughts of my own unworthineſs, and an awful reverence for the holineſs of GOD, and therefore I receive it in the moſt humble poſture I am able. What barbarous notions muſt a man have of the deity, who could imagine, that, if both ſpoke ſincerely, and otherwiſe took the ſacrament conſcientiouſly, tho' in different poſtures, GOD would be offended at either!

TO deſtroy all hatred and animoſities, eſpecially ſuch as are chiefly built on prejudices, and are daily kept up by the ill Offices of others, the firſt ſtep is with patience to conſider what our adverſaries may have to ſay for themſelves: the next is to examine our own conduct, with the ſame ſeverity as we do theirs.

THIS would enlarge the mind, make men give allowances to each other for education and cuſtom, and help to cure them of their bigotry to their own opinion. It would teach diſſenters to diſtinguiſh between things indifferent, and thoſe that are claſhing with the goſpel, and make them know, that many things of human invention may have their uſe in ſacred matters, and be bene-

beneficial to ſociety, without interfering with religion.

A presbyterian that can rejoice, and treat his friends on the anniverſaries of princes, whom he thinks to have been more eminently ſerviceable to his country, can keep queen *Elizabeth*'s and king *William*'s birth-days with pleaſure, would be no longer angry with his neighbour for not forgetting the nativity of his Saviour.

THE ſtrict quaker would no longer ſhock the ſight of ſilly people, by opening his ſhop in the moſt oſtentatious manner, when all his neighbours ſhut theirs the cloſeſt, but by examining the motives of his heart, learn to diſtinguiſh between the ſpirit of GOD, and that of contradiction.

THE rigid churchman, by comparing his own ſtock of inward virtue, with the vaſt concern he ſhews at the ſinfulneſs of ſchiſm in others, would learn to enter into the real cauſe of his uneaſineſs, ſhake hands with perſecution, and no longer miſtake ſelf-intereſt for charity, or party-zeal for religion.

I ſhall end this chapter with putting both churchmen and diſſenters in mind, that to

make religious ſcruples, and be anxiouſly ſollicitous concerning things indifferent, is ſuperſtition; and to have another principle at heart than what men pretend to act from, is hypocriſy; that ſo the crime of either may not be imagin'd to be the characteriſtick of one party more than another.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

Of MYSTERIES.

I Have ſaid in the beginning of the firſt chapter, that, to be chriſtians, it was neceſſary men ſhould believe the myſterious as well as hiſtorical truths of the goſpel. The ſtraining of this, whilſt we require others to explain every part of holy writ our own way, is very deſtructive to charity, and a handle for every communion to deny the name of chriſtian to all thoſe that refuſe exactly to ſubſcribe to their creeds; for ſhould we reject thoſe, who differ from us in the doctrine of one Myſtery, the *Roman* catholicks may imagine, that they might with greater right exclude us from flatly denying another myſtery, which they adore. For this reaſon I ſaid lower, that whoever allow'd of the old and new teſtament, how differently ſoever from others, he might conſtrue ſome

paſſages of either, ſo he but believ'd the whole to be the word of GOD, ought to be call'd a chriſtian.

BOTH proteſtants and *Roman* catholicks perfectly agree, that all Myſteries tranſcend reaſon, and there are ſome popiſh divines, who acknowledge * the myſteries denied by the *Socinians* to be againſt reaſon: but whether any thing contradictory can be the object of our faith, will beſt appear from a view of the difference there is between knowledge and belief.

WHAT has been convey'd by our own ſenſes to our underſtandings, we are ſaid to know: the ſame may be ſaid of every thing, which, after due examination, our reaſon plainly demonſtrates to our judgment to be true or falſe. So when I hear a man ſpeak, and ſee him ſtand before me, I know that he is there. And again, if I can reaſon at all, and exiſt my ſelf, I may be aſſur'd from within, that there is a firſt cauſe; and conſequently I

* Nicolle perpetuitè de la foix, *pag.* 118, 119. *Edit.* 1666.

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can prove to my ſelf, that there is a GOD.

THIS then is call'd knowledge, but, when we admit any thing to be true or falſe, and our judgment is perſuaded that it is the one rather than the other, on an authority from without, the action is call'd believing: of this there are many degrees, and the confidence we believe with is either ſtrong or ſlight, according to the good or indifferent opinion we entertain of the authority, which was the firſt motive of our belief. Experience teaches us, that this opinion is much influenced by the fears, wiſhes, inclinations, and varies according to the capacity of the believer. The ignorant may have a great opinion of an authority, which a wiſe man ſhall altogether deſpiſe: and on the other ſide the wiſe man may find out reaſons to believe, which the other cannot penetrate into. It is to be obſerved, that when men believe, as often they do, on bare ſuſpicion, gueſſes and ſlight ſurmiſes of their own, in theſe caſes, the circumſtances their conjectures are built upon, are all the authority from without, which they have for their belief.

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WHAT I have ſaid may ſeem too philoſophical to thoſe who are not uſed to abſtract thinking; but every body who is but in the leaſt capable of obſerving what paſſes within his own mind, muſt know the difference there is between knowing and believing, and perceive that the firſt implies a certainty, ſuperiour to any aſſurance ever receiv'd from the latter, becauſe, for the firſt we rely on our own teſtimony, and for the latter we muſt truſt to the teſtimony of others. It is very true, that our ſenſes ſometimes deceive us, that our reaſons are falſe, and our judgment errs. This I confeſs is a mortifying reflection; but ſtill the greateſt certainty we can receive muſt come from them; for when once we begin to doubt of our reaſon, and our ſenſes, we are no longer ſure of any thing, an immediate revelation from GOD not excepted; for how ſhall we truſt to a revelation, when we cannot depend either on the ſenſes by which we receive it, or our reaſon, the only touch-ſtone, by which we can aſſure our ſelves of its being divine?

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In the idea we can form of the ſupreme being, the firſt attributes, we are convinc'd of, are his power and wiſdom, though in a degree of perfection vaſtly beyond our capacity to conceive; and if we continue in that contemplation, we ſhall find, that the unity of a GOD muſt be equally neceſſary with his exiſtence: but as ſoon as we admit of reveal'd religion, and the goſpel, we meet with ſomething that ſurpaſſes, if not ſhocks our underſtanding, which is the divinity of JESUS CHRIST, and that of the HOLY GHOST. Men may cavil and wreſt words to their own purpoſe as long as they liſt; but whoever has read the New Teſtament with attention, and denies that he has found any ſuch meaning hinted at there, muſt be either very blind or very obſtinate.

WHAT then muſt we do in this dilemma? ſhall we reject part of the goſpel, or ſay, that there are three Gods, and ſo ſpeak not only againſt the cleareſt ideas we have of the deity, but likewiſe the plaineſt doctrine of the ſame goſpel, as well as of the old teſtament? not to be guilty of either, we ought to treat this point with

the utmoſt diffidence of our own capacity, and fix our eyes on the eternal veracity, as well as the unſearchable wiſdom of GOD; and when once we have aſſured our ſelves that he neither can have the will to deceive us, nor can contradict himſelf, we ſhall look upon the whole as a myſterious truth, which GOD has not been pleaſed to reveal to us in a more intelligible manner.

THE more we endeavour to explain this myſtery, the more intricate we ſhall find it; and it will leſs ſtartle and fright reaſon, when propounded in a few words according to the ſimplicity of the ſcripture, than it does by that great train of explications, that accompany it in *Thomas Aquina*'s commentators. People may wrangle and quarrel about this article to the world's end; but it is impoſſible men ſhould ever entertain the ſame ſentiments of a matter, which is unintelligible in its nature; and it is to be admired how ſo many men of ſenſe, and good logicians, as this point has been controverted by for ſo many ages, could ever imagine that any thing could be a fit ſubject for diſputation,

tion, which no language can give them the leaſt idea of. If GOD has ſo far enlighten'd any one's underſtanding, that he can comprehend more of this myſtery than another, let him pay his acknowledgment with gratitude and humility, but not haughtily dictate to the conſcience of his neighbour, who confeſſes that he has not receiv'd ſo great a meaſure of the divine grace.

OTHERS may interpret for us as they pleaſe, and impoſe upon us what forms they think fit: but whoever will attend to what paſſes in his own mind, may ſoon be convinced, that believing is not a thing of choice. Our church pretends not to infallibility, which implies, that all her members are at full liberty to re-examine whatever ſhe has taught them. No private man therefore ought to be too dogmatical in matters of faith: what to my underſtanding is difficult, and obſcure, cannot be made otherwiſe to me by another's ſaying, that it is clear and eaſy to him; and let us hear what we can, every one at laſt muſt judge for himſelf to the beſt of his ability. *There are innumerable places* (ſays the learned

ned and pious biſhop *Taylor*, * ſpeaking of the holy ſcripture) *that contain, no doubt, great myſteries, but ſo wrapt in clouds, and hid in umbrages, ſo heighten'd with expreſſions, or ſo cover'd with allegories and garments of rhetorick, ſo profound in the matter, or ſo alter'd and made intricate in the manner, that they may ſeem to have been left as trials of our induſtry, and as occaſions and opportunities for the exerciſe of mutual charity and toleration, rather than as the repoſitories of faith, and furniture of creeds.*

THE doctrine of the Trinity was not eſtabliſh'd before the famous council of *Nice*, which every body knows was occaſion'd by the diſputes of *Arius* and *Alexander*, the one a biſhop, and the other a prieſt of *Alexandria*. The fathers of the three firſt centuries had very imperfect notions concerning this myſtery, and they very much differ'd in their opinions, when they began to treat of it, as appears from their various terms, of which ſeveral were unintelligible, and the confuſed expreſſions

* *In his treatiſe on the liberty of propheſying, printed in his collection of political and moral diſcourſes.*

they

they made uſe of. It is evident, that *Conſtantine the Great*, how well ſoever he had been inſtructed in his new religion, was very little acquainted with the point in queſtion before the meeting of that aſſembly, as is ſo viſible from the long letter he wrote to the contending parties above-mentioned, in which he chides them equally.

FOR though each ſide treated the other with the odious name of heretick, and endeavour'd to ſhew, that the ſentiments of the oppoſite party overthrew the chriſtian religion, yet the emperor had no ſuch apprehenſions. *He found* (he ſaid) *that the controverſy had begun in this manner*, * *that* Alexander *having demanded of each of his prieſts, what they thought of a paſſage, or rather on an idle ſort of queſtion*, Arius *inconſiderately anſwered what he ſhould not have thought, or rather conceal'd, if he had thought it; that from thence had come his excommunication, and the diviſion of the people; and therefore he exhorted them to a mutual pardoning of one another, and*

* Euſeb. in vita Conſtant. *c.* 64. Socrat. *l.* 1. *c.* 7.

to receive his opinion, which was, that it had been better not to have troubled the eccleſiaſticks with this queſtion, and that thoſe who were asked it, ſhould have held their tongues, becauſe the matter concerned what was equally incomprehenſible to both parties, and which ſerved only to raiſe diſturbance among the people. He could not conceive, how far a queſtion of very ſmall importance, and in which, if they well underſtood one another, they would find they agreed in the main, they ſhould make ſuch a buſtle, and divide themſelves in ſo ſcandalous a manner.

I do not ſay this (added he) *as if I would conſtrain you to think of the ſame thing on a moſt vain queſtion, or however you pleaſe to call it: for one may, without diſhonouring the aſſembly, and without breaking the communion, be in different ſentiments in ſuch inconſiderable things. We have not all the ſame wills in all things, neither are we all of us of the ſame temper of body and humours.*

THE emperor, it is probable afterwards, inform'd himſelf, that this matter was of great moment, yet in his behaviour touch-

touching this controverſy, he was not always very conſiſtent with himſelf. When *Arius* was condemn'd, he baniſh'd him, and order'd all his [a] books to be burnt; but afterwards recall'd, and invited him to come to court, at his [b] (that is the emperor's) charge: he likewiſe ſhew'd little regard to St. *Athanaſius*, who had been a great ſtickler againſt *Arius*; for when that biſhop, having, in his turn, been condemn'd by his enemies on another account, was ſent in exile, and thoſe of his party [c] in *Alexandria* ceaſed not to implore the emperor, that he might be recall'd; *Conſtantine* [d], in a letter, upbraided the people of that town for their lightneſs and folly, and enjoin'd the eccleſiaſticks to remain quiet, declaring, he would not recal *Athanaſius*, whom he treats as a ſeditious perſon; and the ſame emperor anſwer'd likewiſe to *Anthony* the hermit [e], *that he could not ſlight the judgment of the council*

[a] Euſeb. in vita Conſtant.
[b] Socrat. *l.* 1. *c.* 25.
[c] Sozom. *l.* 2. *c.* 31.
[d] Euſeb. in vita Conſtant.
[e] Euſeb. in vita Conſtant.

of Tyre, *becauſe, that ſuppoſing ſome among the biſhops were paſſionate, yet it was not probable that ſo great a number of wiſe and learned biſhops ſhould all of them act by paſſion; and that* Athanaſius *was an inſolent, proud, troubleſome fellow.*

THE *Arian* hereſy did not die with its author: the emperors *Conſtantius* and *Valens* [a] protected it, and tho' ſome people out of zeal for orthodoxy have maintain'd, [b] that *Arianiſm* never made a great body in the world, nor was of any long [c] continuance, it is certain, that that hereſy ſubſiſted above three hundred years [d] in ſplendour; that it was for almoſt two ages the predominant religion; that it was on the throne in the eaſt and weſt; and that it reign'd in *Italy*, *France*, *Pannonia*, and *Africa*. Several have ſpoke very ſlightingly of the fathers, that compos'd the council of *Nice*; eſpecially *Sabinus*, [e] a *Macedonian*

[a] *See* Trebellius Pollio *in the life of* Galienus.
[b] Jurieu vray ſyſteme de l'egliſe, *p.* 149.
[c] Nicolle, contre jurieu de l'unité de l'egliſe.
[d] Janua cœlorum reſerata, *printed at* Amſterdam, 1692. *pag.* 87.
[e] Socrat. *l.* 7.

bi-

biſhop of *Heraclea*, a town of *Thrace*, who treats them as ignoramus's in his collection of Councils; but *Euſebius*, biſhop of *Ceſarea*, who aſſiſted at it, has highly [a] extolled their wiſdom and capacity, and ſome learned men of the laſt century have ſpoke in defence of them. Be their praiſe what it will, this is evident from many circumſtances, that their debates were as much influenced by private grudges [b] and perſonal hatreds, as the love of truth, or any real piety. When ſeveral of theſe biſhops, after the council of *Nice*, were met at *Jeruſalem*, on another troubleſom affair, *Conſtantine*, who was ſo bigotted to the clergy, wrote to them, complaining, [c] *that in a time, wherein the* barbarians *began to acknowledge the true* GOD, *the chriſtians, who would be thought to have the myſteries of* GOD *in their keeping* (for he durſt not ſay that they kept them) *labour'd only to entertain diviſions and hatred among them, not to ſay for the deſtruction of mankind.*

[a] Euſeb. in vita Conſtant.
[b] Sozom. *l.* 1, *c.* 17.
[c] Euſeb. in vita Conſtant.

THE contentions about this myſtery of the Trinity, begun by two clergy-men, have already at one time or other been the ruin of millions of laymen, and are like to do more miſchief in the world, if the civil magiſtrate interpoſes not and hinders the clergy from ever reviving this affair. Happy had it been for chriſtianity, had all the clergy been of *Sozomen*'s opinion, who ſaid, [a] *that he did not dare to relate the creed of* Nice, *becauſe ſome, his pious and learned friends in this matter, adviſed him to ſuppreſs the things, which the initiates and prieſts alone ſhould underſtand, and that, according to their council, he had conceal'd what was to be kept ſilent.*

THE great danger there is in the quarrels of the clergy is, that there can be no drawn battle among them; being in all their conteſts both judges and parties, one ſide muſt fall, and there can be no peace without a conqueſt. Could clergy-men have been ſatisfied without cruſhing their adverſaries, the *Arian* hereſy might have been prevented; for when the *Arians* ſhewed, that they were ready to ſubmit to a

[a] Sozom. *l.* 1. *c.* 20.

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confeſſion expreſs'd in the terms propos'd to them, the orthodox biſhops fear'd, [a] leſt they ſhould expound theſe terms in an ill ſenſe, and therefore made an addition to it more binding; which, when the *Arians* likewiſe would have ſubſcribed to, the orthodox ſtill found out more hampering terms, till at laſt from an incomprehenſible myſtery they made it in the opinion of the *Antitrinitarians*, a plain and intelligible contradiction. If this expreſſion be thought too harſh, I deſire the reader to conſider, that it is no more than what the greateſt champions of the *Trinitarians* are proud to own. Hear what Monſieur *Nicolle* ſays of the doctrine of the Trinity, *It* [b] *confounds reaſon*, ſays he, *and prompts it to revolt. If there be any viſible difficulties, they are thoſe which are contain'd in that myſtery, that three perſons really diſtinct have one and the ſame eſſence, and that this eſſence being the ſame thing in each perſon with the relations that diſtinguiſh them, may be communicated without the*

[a] *Monſ.* le Clerc, *in the life of* Euſebius.

[b] *Monſ.* Nicolle, perpetuité de la foi, *pag.* 118, *Edit.* 1666.

com-

communication of the relations which diſtinguiſh the perſons. If human reaſon conſults her ſelf, ſhe will riſe up againſt thoſe inconceivable truths: if ſhe pretends to make uſe of her own light to penetrate into them, it will furniſh her with arms to engage againſt them. Wherefore, in order to believe them, ſhe ought to blind her ſelf, to ſtifle all her Ratiocinations, and depreſs and ſink her ſelf under the weight of divine authority.

To give effectual directions for believing of myſteries is almoſt as difficult as it is to explain them. As to our duty, concerning this of the Trinity, I think we ought to examine the ſcriptures and believe of it what we can conceive the word of God would have us, without depriving others of the ſame liberty. I would ſay very near the ſame of moſt myſteries, tho' I incur the cenſures of our zealous clergy, who will call this the advice of a latitudinarian, if not worſe: thoſe gentlemen are not always very conſiſtent with themſelves. The proteſtants could never have withdrawn themſelves from the church of *Rome*, with any ſhew of reaſon, without denying her infallibility; yet the reform'd in general are

ſo very uneaſy at the loſs of it for themſelves, that there is hardly a ſect of them, but the zealots of it are angry with every body, that will not ſubmit to their authority.

THE moderate men of our church are not ſo poſitive as to their own interpretations of the ſcriptures, and think that [a] it is unreaſonable to require all men, under the pain of an anathema, to ſee, that one particular poſition is the certain ſenſe of a paſſage really ambiguous and difficult. It were fit, ſays biſhop *Taylor*, that [b] our confidence ſhould be according to our evidence, and our zeal according to our confidence. I deſire the reader to take the ſentiments of this learned prelate concerning private judgment and opinions on theſe and all matters of diſpute in his own words, *Since* (ſays he) *there are* [c] *ſo many copies with infinite varieties of reading; ſince a various interpunction, a parentheſis, a letter, an accent may much alter the ſenſe; ſince*

[a] *Biſhop* Taylor *on the liberty of propheſying.*
[b] Idem ibid.
[c] Idem *p.* 453, *Edit.* 1657.

ſome

ſome places have divers literal ſenſes, may have ſpiritual, myſtical, and allegorical meanings; ſince there are ſo many tropes, metonymies, ironies, hyperboles, proprieties, and improprieties of language, whoſe underſtanding depends upon ſuch circumſtances, that it is almoſt impoſſible to know the proper interpretation, now that the knowledge of ſuch circumſtances and particular ſtories is irrecoverably loſt; ſince there are ſome myſteries, which at the beſt advantage of expreſſion are not ſo eaſy to be apprehended, and whoſe application, by reaſon of our imperfections, muſt needs be dark, ſometimes weak, ſometimes unintelligible: and laſtly, ſince theſe ordinary means of expounding ſcripture, as ſearching the originals, conference of places, parity of reaſon, and analogy of faith, are all dubious, uncertain, and very fallible; he that is the wiſeſt, and by conſequence the likelieſt to expound trueſt, in all probability of reaſon, will be very far from confidence; becauſe every one of theſe, and many more, are like ſo many degrees of improbability and uncertainty, all depreſſing our certainty of finding out truth in ſuch myſteries, and amidſt ſo many difficulties. And therefore a wiſe man that con-

conſiders this, would not willingly be preſcribed to by others; for it is beſt, every man ſhould be left in that liberty from which no man can juſtly take him unleſs he could ſecure him from error.

THE ſame biſhop having told us in another place, that all the diſputes concerning tradition, councils, fathers, *&c.* were not arguments beſides, or againſt reaſon, but conteſtations and pretences to the beſt arguments, and to the moſt certain ſatisfaction to our reaſon, goes on thus. *But* [a] *then all theſe coming into queſtion ſubmit themſelves to reaſon, that is, to be judg'd by human underſtanding, upon the beſt grounds and information it can receive. So that ſcripture, tradition, councils and fathers, are the evidence in a queſtion, but reaſon is the judge: that is, we being the perſons that are to be perſuaded, we muſt ſee, that we be perſuaded reaſonably; and it is unreaſonable to aſſent to a leſſer evidence, when a greater and clearer is propounded: but of that, every man for himſelf is to take cognizance, if he be able to judge; if he be not,*

[a] Idem 507.

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he is not bound under the tye of neceſſity to know any thing of it.

IN ſuch leſſons and conſiderations as theſe, how ungrateful ſoever they may be to fiery zealots, are contain'd a true preſervative from falling into ſchiſm, and the greateſt antidote againſt perſecution; for, as on the one hand, they will mitigate the troubles of ſcrupulous conſciences, ſo on the other, they will cure uncharitableneſs in thoſe, whoſe ſufficiency makes them incapable of bearing with any opinion but their own.

THEY will likewiſe help to draw men off from vain ſpeculations and empty cavils, and to promote concord and true religion; for it is union and the practice of virtue we want: theſe are the national bleſſings we ſtand moſt in need of. It is not faith we are defective in: [a] the multitude in all countries, as well as our own, are apt enough to believe what is taught them by their ſpiritual guides.

NOTHING can be more ſhocking to human reaſon, than the doctrine of the

[a] *See pag.* 7, 8, *and* 17.

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real preſence in the euchariſt; yet we find not, that among the *Roman* catholicks, who maintain tranſubſtantiation, or the *Lutherans*, who hold a conſubſtantiation, the people boggle more at the articles of their faith, than they do among others, by whom the words that have occaſion'd that pretended myſtery are taken in a figurative ſenſe.

THERE is hardly a truth more eaſily apprehended, or which we are more fully convinc'd of, than that two and two make four: yet were men to be taught from their infancy that it was a myſtery, that on a certain occaſion two and two made ſeven, with an addition to be believ'd on pain of damnation, I am perſuaded, that at leaſt ſeven in ten would ſwallow the ſhameful paradox; and that if they had always ſeen others ill treated for disbelieving of it, by that time they were come to years of maturity, they would not only aſſert it themſelves, but likewiſe diſlike, if not hate thoſe, who ſhould call it in queſtion. We muſt ſuppoſe, that it had been inculcated to them with application and aſſiduity by parents, nurſes, maſters, and

and all that had the tuition of, or any direction over them. Few people are acquainted with the force of prejudice: we are little capable of examining any thing which is rooted in us by education and cuſtom.

BUT, that my reader may ſee the opinion of one of our greateſt divines, concerning the effects of dogmatiſing in divinity, and the proneneſs of the people to believe, I ſhall quote part of what archbiſhop *Tillotſon* ſays [a] of myſteries on account of tranſubſtantiation, *We will ſuppoſe then*, ſays his grace, *that about the time when univerſal ignorance, and the genuine daughter of it, (call her devotion or ſuperſtition) had overſpread the world, and the generality of the people were ſtrongly inclin'd to believe ſtrange things; and even the greateſt contradictions were recommended to them under the notion of myſteries; being told by their prieſts and guides, that the more contradictious any thing is to reaſon, the greater merit there is in believing it: I ſay, let us ſuppoſe, that in this ſtate of things, one or*

[a] *Archbiſhop* Tillotſon *in his rule of faith*, p. 716, &c.

more of the moſt eminent then in the church, either out of deſign, or out of ſuperſtitious ignorance, and miſtake of the ſenſe of our Saviour's words, uſed in the conſecration of the ſacrament, ſhould advance this new doctrine, that the words of conſecration, &c. ——Such a doctrine as this was likely to be advanced by the ambitious clergy of that time, as a probable means to draw in the people to a greater veneration of them. ——Nor was ſuch a doctrine leſs likely to take and prevail among the people in an age prodigiouſly ignorant, and ſtrongly inclin'd to ſuperſtition, and thereby well prepar'd to receive the groſſeſt abſurdities under the notion of myſteries——Now ſuppoſing ſuch a doctrine as this ſo fitted to the humour and temper of the age, to be once aſſerted either by chance or out of deſign, it would take like wild-fire; eſpecially if by ſome one or more who bore ſway in the church, it were but recommended with convenient gravity and ſolemnity——And for the contradictions contain'd in this doctrine, it was but telling the people then (as they do in effect now) that contradictions ought to be no ſcruple in the way of faith;

that the more impoſſible any thing is, 'tis the fitter to be believ'd; that it is not praiſe-worthy to believe plain poſſibilities, but this is the galantry and heroical power of faith; this is the way to oblige God Almighty for ever to us, to believe flat and downright contradictions——— The more abſurd and unreaſonable a thing is, the more proper matter for an article of faith. And if any of theſe innovations be objected againſt, as contrary to former belief and practice, it is but putting forth a luſty act of faith, and believing another contradiction, that though they be contrary, yet they are the ſame.

No candid reader can imagine, that I would endeavour to make ſlight of faith, or leſſen the reverence that is due to the real myſtery of our religion, any more than either of theſe prelates; and I can aſſure him, that the great end, of what I have ſaid and quoted of others in this chapter, is to promote the publick peace and tranquillity, by ſhewing, how conſiſtent it may be made with our piety to God, and charity to our neighbours. For which reaſon, in the firſt place, I recommend the ſerious conſideration of it to thoſe of the orthodox, who

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can accommodate themſelves to every word of our creeds, conjuring them not to exact rigorouſly the ſame of every body, who owns himſelf to be of their communion. When men are peaceable and quiet, without ever deſiring to mention the ſcruples, which perhaps they may labour under in their private opinion, they ought not to be forc'd to ſubſcribe to every model of faith that others ſhall conceive for them. Thoſe trials are ever attended with human paſſion, and generally end in perſonal hatreds. A man may believe the ſame in ſubſtance with us, but have a ſcruple concerning perhaps one ſingle word in a whole article of faith: when we conſider, that this article was drawn up by uninſpired men, and perhaps thoſe words put in on purpoſe to puzzle an adverſary, who had ſhew'd a diſlike to them; is it not unchriſtian like, to drag ſuch a man out of his cloſet to make him ſign to it, and not ſuffer him to reſt, till by his refuſal we ſhall have an opportunity of calling him heretick, and expoſing him as an enemy to GOD and religion? but how inhuman and how execrable would

it be, ſhould this ever be done with a deſign to rob him of his livelyhood, and the good opinion of his fellow chriſtians, that are unacquainted with the controverſy?

BUT then again I would not more earneſtly perſuade the orthodox rigoriſts to avoid all narrow ſcrutinies of conſciences but their own, than I would exhort the admirers of human underſtanding, not to rely too much upon their own ſufficiency. How uſeful ſoever philoſophy may be to ſociety, and the affairs of human life; it is the worſt guide to eternity, and ought never to be mixed with theology. He that will admit of no proof inferiour to a mathematical demonſtration can never be a chriſtian, and there is no ſyſtem found out yet, by which the *Socinians* themſelves could explain, and ſalve the difficulties to be met with in the goſpel, even according to their own interpretation. Every man of thought muſt be convinced, that there are truths for which it were ridiculous to expect demonſtration.

I ſhall end this chapter, by ſetting forth in two eaſy inſtances the difference there

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is, between things that are above reaſon, and ſurpaſs our capacity, and ſuch as are againſt reaſon, and contradict demonſtration.

WAS I to hear of a man, who could ſee through an oaken plank two inches thick, every where ſolid and entire, I would refuſe to believe it, even on the teſtimony of ten thouſand witneſſes otherwiſe credible: but had GOD revealed to me, that he had made ſuch an one, I would immediately ſubmit, and as ſoon as I was ſatisfied, that the revelation was really divine, would believe it as ſurely, and, if it be poſſible with leſs ſcruple than now I believe that there is ſuch a place as *Japan*, which has been confirmed to me ſeveral hundred ways. I would laugh at any body, that ſhould talk of ſtrait pores, and what only would make things diaphanous; I would not hearken to opticks or refractions, and deſpiſe all reaſoners, who ſhould pretend to demonſtrate the impoſſibility of it. Here a man would have nothing to do, but to conquer the good opinion he has of human underſtanding, the ſhallowneſs

of

of which, the moſt knowing are ſo well convinc'd of on thouſand occaſions. In this caſe I would not only call it preſumption, but the higheſt inſolence, to oppoſe the penetration of all the philoſophers in the world to the leaſt idea, a reaſonable man can have of the omnipotence of GOD.

THE proud naturaliſts and mathematicians, who ſhould endeavour to diſſuade me from my belief, I would lead into a contemplation of the immenſity, and the order of the creation, the union between ſoul and body, and other wonders of the univerſe, that are moſt obvious; and having made them ſenſible of the pitiful ſtock of real knowledge they are poſſeſſed of, I would ask them, what it was he could not make, that had made heaven and earth.

BUT on the other hand, when a man once knows that two and two makes four, and yet aſſerts, that he believes that two and two on a certain occaſion may make ſeven; if he be ſincere, it is evident, that he either knows not what he ſays, or at leaſt

leaſt underſtands not what to believe ſignifies. For after all, tho' a man may believe a thing to be true, which he apprehends not at all, it is impoſſible he ſhould believe the contrary of what he plainly apprehends to be true.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

Of Free-Will and Predeſtination.

WHAT we call the will is properly the laſt reſult of deliberation, either long or ſhort, which immediately precedes the execution of, or at leaſt the endeavour to execute the thing will'd: I ſay the reſult, which immediately precedes the execution; for, when a will or volition is made long before the execution of the thing will'd, it is only call'd a reſolution, and always requires a latter will to ſet about it, and ſometimes a great many, or elſe will never be executed. So a man, whoſe head achs after a debauch, ſays, and perhaps with great ſincerity, that he will live ſoberly for the future. But theſe might better be call'd wiſhes, than wills or volitions; which latter always imply an execution,

or

or at leaſt, an endeavour for it: and theſe can never be free; for as ſoon as the will is made, the thing will'd is determin'd, and before it is made, it is no will yet; but only a deliberation, what to will.

THE reaſon, why every body imagines that he has a free-will, is, becauſe we are conſcious, that in the choice of things we feel a power (which we perceive not to be controuled by any thing) to determine our judgment either way. But when once we reflect on what paſſes within us, and conſider that in making this choice, at leaſt in things of moment, and that are worth obſerving, we conſult all our faculties, and are forc'd in ſpight of our teeth to chuſe that, which, to our then preſent inclination, often to our viſible detriment, ſeems to be moſt eligible. If we reflect on this, I ſay, our wills ſhall not ſeem to be ſo free, as is commonly imagin'd.

EVERY body can wiſh what he pleaſes, but it is not ſo with his will; and, was the one as arbitrary as the other, there would be more virtue, and not half the miſery, and what are call'd misfortunes in

the world, of what we now ſee men labour under. There is hardly a perſon ſo debauch'd, but what has often wiſh'd, tho' but for his health's or fortune's ſake, that it was in his power to lead a more regular life: what is it hinders him, but his appetites and inclinations, that influence and ſeduce his will, and do him the ſame prejudice he could receive from a fatal and unavoidable neceſſity of ſinning?

THAT the true motives of our will ſo often paſs by undiſcovered, is to be attributed to the ſwiftneſs of thought, and the ſudden diverſity of our volitions, which often ſucceed each other ſo inſtantaneouſly, that when men are in haſte and irreſolute, we may ſometimes obſerve one part of the body yet employ'd in executing a former will, whilſt another ſhall be already obeying the commands of a latter: but when we act ſlowly, and what is call'd deliberately, the motives of every volition muſt be obvious to all that have the courage, as well as capacity, to ſearch into them.

GIVE two men each a glaſs in his hand of ſome value, which, if he breaks

it, he is to pay for: let the one be of a covetous nature, but no wrangler, and very pliable as to opinion; the other very poſitive, but laviſh of his money. Diſpute with either of theſe pretty warmly againſt free-will, and the power he has of dropping the glaſs, or keeping it in his hand. The firſt, depend upon it, will not let it fall; and, dare him to it never ſo much, he'll content himſelf with ſaying, that he is ſure he can do it if he will, but that he has no mind to throw away ſo much money to be laugh'd at. The other, 'tis ten to one, will daſh it to pieces, and if he dares ſpeak his mind, tell you, that he had rather pay for the glaſs, than not have the pleaſure to convince you of your folly, obſtinacy, or what elſe his paſſion or manners ſhall give him leave to call it.

I doubt not but both perſons would be fully perſuaded, and therefore might ſwear with a good conſcience, that they had acted from a principle of free-will, though it ſeems plain to me, that each of them was prompted to what he did, and over-rul'd by a predominant paſſion.

I know very well, that it is poſſible that the covetous man might have broke the glaſs as well as the other, but then his love for money muſt have been leſs, or his deſire of triumph greater than would be ſuitable to the character I required him to be of.

THIS may ſerve to put us in mind, with what care and vigilance we ought to examine and guard our ſelves againſt thoſe paſſions, which ſo covertly govern and hurry us away, even unknown to our ſelves. The ſolidity of which moral, I hope, will make amends for the meanneſs of the example, which ſome may imagine to be below the dignity of the ſubject I treat of in this chapter.

THE word predeſtination is ſo well underſtood by all parties, that it would be ſuperfluous to explain it further. That this is a doctrine openly laid down in the goſpel, is evident to all that can read; that it is likewiſe attended with difficulties inexplicable to human reaſon, is as undeniable. I ſhall only take notice of the chief objection that is made againſt it, which is, that it makes GOD the author

of ſin. The plainneſs with which this doctrine has been taught by St. *Paul*, and the terrible conſequences to be drawn from it by as plain a manner of reaſoning, have occaſioned innumerable hereſies and ſchiſms, each of which has, at different times, been the cauſe of thouſands of miſchiefs and calamities among chriſtians.

IT is certain, that whilſt we only follow the light of nature, nothing can be more inconſiſtent with the ideas we have of the juſtice and goodneſs of GOD, than that a creature ſhould be puniſhed for ſins, which from eternity it was decreed he ſhould commit. It is this that has produced the various ſyſtems of the more and leſs daring advocates for free-will; but I ſhall endeavour to demonſtrate on the one hand, that the boldeſt aſſertors of human liberty, the *Socinians* not excepted, have not remov'd the difficulty as to the origin of evil; and on the other, that all the ſolution and arguments of the predeſtinarians, drawn from human reaſon, have hitherto been inſufficient to anſwer the objections that have been made to them. And when from hence it ſhall appear, that the debate is

about the greateſt myſtery of our religion, I doubt not but to convince every reaſonable man, that it is a fitter ſubject for our reſignation to the reveal'd will of GOD, than it is for quarrels and contentions with one another.

IT would hardly be poſſible to think of any thing, that in ſo many thouſand controverſies, as are to be met with on this head, has not been ſaid by one or other; for this reaſon, I have in my eye a celebrated author, who was endu'd with a vaſt ſtock of learning, and no leſs penetration, and has treated of this matter with greater moderation and impartiality than any other. From him I ſhall borrow ſeveral paſſages, and often manage what I have to ſay in his words, with little addition of my own.

IT muſt be allow'd, that the hypotheſis of human liberty ſeems at firſt view to clear the doubt: but it only puts the miſchief farther off, and can never take it away. It is needleſs to run thro' the ſeveral degrees, and the different ſyſtems that have been made of it by the *Pelagians*, *Semi-pelagians*, *Originiſts*, *Moliniſts*, *Synergiſts*,

giſts, and *Arminians*, and many others; ſince thoſe who ſuppoſe the moſt abſolute free-will, if they are cloſely purſued, muſt at laſt be involv'd in, and leave the ſame difficulties unclear'd, which frighten men from predeſtination. From the ſimple queſtion, what is the cauſe of ſin? the reſult of a thouſand diſputes muſt at long run be this. GOD is eternal, and a being infinitely good, ſo there could be no evil before the world was made; GOD created the world, then whence comes evil?

THIS, allowing the ſyſtem of the creation, being unanſwerable to human capacities, produced in the ſecond century the *Marcionites*, and after them [a] the *Manicheans*. Theſe hereticks denied the old teſtament, and, among other impieties, ſuppoſed two coeternal principles, the one of all [b] good, and the other of all evil: the good principle, they ſaid, would have made every thing good, if he had not been oppos'd; but the bad principle being as powerful, and equally deſirous to introduce

[a] *In the third century.*

[b] Auguſtin de Hereſ. *c.* 46.

evil, as the other was to do good, the good principle was forc'd to yield to neceſſity; and thus the world, which is a compound of good and evil, was, after many conflicts, produced by the agreement of theſe two principles.

How oppoſite ſoever this opinion was to reveal'd religion, and the cleareſt ideas we have of the unity of God, when once this monſtrous hypotheſis was admitted, it explain'd the phænomena of human life better than any other, and ſolv'd innumerable difficulties that were inexplicable to the orthodox, whilſt both parties confin'd themſelves to the light of nature. Nothing was more eaſy to the fathers of the church, than to overthrow theſe hereſies, when they attack'd them upon the abſurdity of their ſyſtem, and the orthodox were the agreſſors; but when the *Manicheans* made the attack, it was a very hard task to anſwer their objections, and the fathers would not have triumphed over them at ſo cheap a rate as they did, had the others known better how to puſh them home. Had *Cerdon*, *Marcion*, *Apelles*, and *Manes* been as able diſputants, as many have

have been in the laſt century among the jeſuits and janſeniſts, they would not have been ſilenc'd as they were.

WHEN the hereticks, by way of oppoſition, enquir'd into the cauſe of evil, they were commonly anſwer'd, that man was created by GOD in a happy ſtate; but he, not following the light of his conſcience, which was intended by the author of his being to conduct him in the way of virtue, became wicked, and ſo deſerv'd, that GOD, who was ſovereignly juſt as well as good, ſhould make him feel the effect of his wrath; ſo that GOD is not the author of moral evil, but of phyſical evil, which is the puniſhment of moral evil. When this was anſwer'd them, or any thing elſe, by which the cauſe of ſin was thrown on the free-will of the creature, they had nothing to reply; but if they had asked why this free-will was given to man, or if it was given, why ſo good a judge as he was, it ſhould determine his choice to evil, more work would have been cut out for their antagoniſts: for every man's reaſon, they might have ſaid, muſt ſuggeſt to him, that if man was the workmanſhip of a prin-

a principle infinitely good and holy, he ſhould not only have been created without any actual evil, but alſo without any inclination, or the leaſt propenſity to evil, ſince that inclination is ſuch a defect, as could not have ſuch a principle for its cauſe.

WHAT *Origen* told the *Marcionites*, *That* [a] *an intelligent creature, who had not enjoy'd free-will, had been immutable and immortal like* GOD, is likewiſe eaſy to refute. They need only to have ask'd *Origen*, whether the bleſſed in paradiſe are equal to GOD in the attributes of immutability and immortality. He muſt have anſwer'd in the negative, and conſequently it is not true, that a creature becomes a GOD, becauſe it is determin'd to do good, and depriv'd of that which he calls free-will.

THE anſwer of St. *Baſil* has the ſame fault: GOD, (ſays he) *would* [b] *not have us to love him by conſtraint, and we our ſelves do not think our ſervants well diſpo-*

[a] *In a dialogue againſt the* Marcionites, *attributed to* Origen, Sect. 3.

[b] Baſilius magnus, *Tom.* 1. in homilia quod deus non ſit autor mali.

ſea

ſed to our ſervice whilſt we hold them in chains, but only when they obey us from their own free pleaſure. What would St. *Baſil* have replied, if they had remonſtrated to him, that in paradice GOD is lov'd and ſerv'd perfectly well, and yet the bleſſed do not enjoy free-will, and that they have not that fatal privilege of the power to commit ſin? Muſt we therefore compare them to ſlaves? And again, what would he ſay to the righteous upon earth, who by the aſſiſtance of the divine grace love their heavenly father, and perform good works? Does the grace of GOD reduce the faithful to the condition of ſlaves? It is evident then, that without infringing the liberty of the creature, GOD could infallibly determine it to what is good, and therefore ſin does not proceed from hence, that the Creator could not prevent it without deſtroying the free-will of the creature; but we muſt look out for ſome other cauſe of it.

SOME have urg'd, that GOD permitted ſin to manifeſt his wiſdom, which ſhines more brightly by the diſorders, which the wickedneſs of men produces every day, than

than it would have done in a ſtate of innocence: but this is inconſiſtent with the ideas we have of the juſtice and goodneſs of GOD, and would be to compare the deity to a father, who ſhould ſuffer his children to break their legs, on purpoſe to ſhew all the city his great skill in ſetting their broken bones.

MANY more reaſons have been alledged for the permiſſion of ſin; but the beſt that human wit has hitherto invented, may be oppos'd by others more ſpecious and more agreeable to the ideas we have of order, and the difficulty concerning the origin of evil remains the ſame in natural as well as reveal'd religion; for which reaſon the fathers had the heathen philoſophers to anſwer on this head, as well as the hereticks that ſprung from the church.

SOME of the pagans have made weighty objections againſt providence: that of *Epicurus*, as to evil, is of great force. GOD, ſays he, is either willing to take away evil, and is not able; or he is able, and not willing; or elſe he is neither willing nor able, or he is both willing and able.

If

If he is willing and not able, he is weak, which can't be ſaid of GOD; if he is able and not willing, he is envious, which is equally abſurd to ſay; if he is neither willing nor able, he is both weak and envious: and if he is both willing and able, which is the only thing of the four that can be ſaid of GOD, then whence comes evil? this concerns not moral evil; but, if it did, the argument would be ſtill more perplexing. *Lactantius* anſwers, [a] *that* GOD *is able, but not willing to take away evil, without being envious for all that: for the reaſon,* ſays he, *why* GOD *takes not away evil, is, becauſe it gives us wiſdom, and at the ſame time more good, and more pleaſure in that wiſdom, than there is trouble in evil. It is through wiſdom we know* GOD, *and through that knowledge we gain immortality, which is the higheſt good; ſo that unleſs we firſt know evil, we can never attain to the knowledge of good. But this* Epicurus *ſees not, nor any other, that if evil be taken away, wiſdom is taken away in like manner, and there remain in men no foot-*

[a] Lactant. de ira Dei, *cap.* 13.

ſteps

ſteps of virtue, the eſſence of which conſiſts in bearing and overcoming the bitterneſs of evil. Thus for a ſmall ſpace if we ſhould be without evil, we ſhould be deſtitute of the greateſt and real good that belongs to us.

THIS anſwer of *Lactantius* is not only pitiful and weak, but full of errors, and perhaps hereſies. It ſuppoſes, that GOD muſt produce evil, becauſe otherwiſe he would not be able to communicate either wiſdom or virtue, or the knowledge of what is good. It overthrows all that divines tell us about the happineſs of paradice, and the ſtate of innocence. Are we not told, that *Adam* and *Eve* in this happy ſtate felt, without any mixture of uneaſineſs, all the pleaſures which that delicious and charming place the garden of *Eden*, where GOD placed them, could afford them? Beſides, do not all chriſtians take it for granted, that, if they had not ſinned, they and all their poſterity ſhould have enjoy'd this happineſs without being ſubject either to diſeaſes or troubles, and that neither the elements nor animals had ever done them any harm? It was their ſin that expos'd them to cold and heat,

to

to hunger and thirſt, to pain and ſorrow, and to the miſchiefs, which certain beaſts do to us.

It is ſo far from being true, that virtue and wiſdom cannot belong to a man without phyſical evil, as *Lactantius* affirms, that on the contrary it muſt be maintained, that man has been ſubject to this evil only, becauſe he renounc'd virtue and wiſdom. The ſtoicks had committed the ſame fault, as *Lactantius*, and maintain'd the uſefulneſs of vice, without [a] which, they ſaid, there could have been no virtue. But ſee how ſolidly they were refuted by *Plutarch*. *Is there* [b] *then*, ſays he, *no good among the gods, becauſe there is no evil? And when* Jupiter *having reſolved all matter into himſelf, ſhall be alone, other differences being taken away, will there then be no good, becauſe there is no evil? But is it true, that there is a melody in a choir, though none in it ſing faultily, and health in the body, though no member is ſick; and cannot virtue have its exiſtence without vice?*

[a] Aul. Gellius, *lib. c.* 1.

[b] Plutarch. Iſis & Oſir.

I wonder they do not ſay, that the conſumption was made for the ſound conſtitution of mens bodies, and the gout for the ſwiftneſs of their feet, and that Achilles *would not have had a good head of hair, if* Therſites *had not been bald: for what difference is there between ſuch triflers and ravers, and thoſe, who ſay, that intemperance was brought forth not unprofitably for continence, nor injuſtice for juſtice, that ſo we may pray to the gods there may be always wickedneſs?*

THE argument of *Epicurus*, without the help of reveal'd religion, is not to be anſwer'd by any other ſyſtem, but that of the two principles, which immediately clears that and all other difficulties concerning the origin of evil. How ſtrange and deplorable is the fate of human reaſon, that the worſt of hereticks, nay the heathens themſelves, ſhould with an hypotheſis altogether abſurd and contradictory, be able to explain, what we experience, a hundred times better than orthodox chriſtians do with a ſuppoſition ſo juſt, ſo neceſſary, and ſo true, of one firſt principle,

ciple, which is infinitely good and almighty!

This doctrine of two principles, which is now known by the name of manicheiſm, has often violently diſturb'd the peace of the church. It ſettled in ſeveral provinces of the empire, and ſome of the *Marcionites* were ſo zealous for this impiety, as to die for it, which made them boaſt of having had many martyrs. [a] St. *Auguſtin*, among others, before he was converted by St. *Ambroſe*, had embrac'd this hereſy, and maintain'd moſt of the doctrines of it with great fervency. The *Paulicians*, the *Carpocratians*, the *Gnoſticks*, and ſeveral other Sects of hereticks among the chriſtians, were all of this opinion; but the doctrine it ſelf had not its riſe from chriſtianity, and was much older. *It is* [b] *impoſſible*, ſays *Plutarch*, in his treatiſe of *Iſis* and *Oſiris*, *that one cauſe alone, whether good or bad, ſhould be the principle of all things together*; and having given ſeveral reaſons and inſtances to prove his aſſertion, he adds; *For nothing can be without a precedent cauſe,*

[a] Auguſt. Confeſſ. *lib.* 6. *c.* 15.
[b] Plutarch. Iſis & Oſir.

and what is good in it ſelf, can never be the cauſe of evil; nature therefore muſt have a principle, from which evil proceeds as its cauſe and principle, as well as another from which good proceeds: 'tis the opinion of the greateſt part, and the wiſeſt among the ancients; for ſome think there are two gods of different profeſſions, the one the author of all good, the other of all evil.

PYTHAGORAS and *Plato* held the ſame falſe tenet; but the firſt, who is known to have broached this doctrine, was *Zoroaſter*, king of the *Bactrians*. The good principle he call'd [a] *Oromazes*, the other *Arimanius*. He paſſed likewiſe for the firſt [b] inventor of magick. This *Zoroaſter* lived above eight hundred years (ſome ſay much [c] more) before the *Trojan* war, and has made himſelf one of the moſt famous men in the world. There are learned men [d] who affirm, that there

[a] Diogenes Laert. in proœmio.

[b] Juſtin. *lib.* 1. *c.* 1.

[c] Hermippus & Hermodorus. *See* Diogen. in Laert. in proœm.

[d] *Dr.* Hyde, Hiſtor. Religion. veterum Perſar.

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remain ſome of this ſect in the *Indies*, and other parts of *Aſia*, to this day.

In *Europe* and *Aſia* the doctrine of two coeternal principles has not been maintain'd for many ages, though a manichean now-a-days would be more formidable than ever; and there is hardly an argument, that in the controverſy about free-will and predeſtination has been made uſe of theſe two laſt centuries, but what would ſtrengthen his ſyſtem, was nothing but human reaſon admitted of to judge by.

Reveal'd religion therefore, the Old and New Teſtament, are only capable of cutting this gordian knot: for it is as great an abſurdity to ſuppoſe the ſupreme being to be deſtitute of infinite power and knowledge, as it is to make him cruel and tyrannical to the laſt extremity. But it is yet more unaccountable than either, that men ſhould be willing to give up a conſiderable part of God's knowledge and power, when they muſt neceſſarily ſee, that even by their own ſcheme they cannot clear the attributes they contend for,

and which to preſerve they are ſo ready to ſacrifice any other.

THE *Socinians*, to extricate themſelves from this difficulty, deny the [a] creation out of nothing. They look for the origin of evil into matter it ſelf, which they ſay is uncreated and eternal. But GOD has modified matter, endued it with motion, and made a world of it. If he could not deſtroy or root out theſe evil particles, he has at leaſt ſo well diſpoſed of them as not to interfere with the deſign of his workmanſhip, or elſe, what faults are there in the univerſe? have they met with any flaws in it? let them behold the firmament and celeſtial bodies, conſider well the vaſtneſs of their magnitudes as well as numbers, the rapidity of their motion, and the ſtability of that order, by which they perform their different and unequal courſes with ſo much ſteadineſs and harmony. The laws of motion are not more changeable or irregular here below, nor

[a] *See Monſ.* Bayle's *Dictionary in the Article of* Epicurus, Remark S.

are

are the various forms we ſee it ſhape matter into on earth, leſs ſtupendous than what we ſee above: ſo that let matter have been either created or not, and as independent as they pleaſe; it is certain, that to make it what it is, and bring it into this fabrick, muſt have required a power and a wiſdom ſo infinite, and ſo vaſtly tranſcending all imagination, that nothing but ignorance and ſtupidity can ſave a man from falling into extaſies of admiration, whenever he ventures to think of it.

ORDER then and [a] beauty are conſpicuous in every thing without us; and the leaſt part of the univerſe (our ſelves excepted) beſpeaks a GOD for its author. The only ſlur on all the divine works is to be found in man. In that lump of earth, from which omnipotent wiſdom choſe to form the moſt perfect of his labours, the particles of evil, that had been pliable in all the reſt, were ſo ſtubborn and refractory as to elude all the skill and power of the great architect. Here they

[a] Baronius ann. eccleſ. ad annum. 120.

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remain'd in ſuch a force and condition that they were able to pervert and turn to evil a virtuous and innocent, a rational, a knowing and well inſtructed being. What miſerable ſhifts men will make to compliment their own underſtanding! GOD would have remedied this; but was not able.

BUT if GOD had had a preſervative, that would effectually have prevented this miſchief, is it agreeable to the notions we have of infinite goodneſs, that he would not have given it to man? yet this is the caſe: they can't deny, but that GOD might have aſſiſted our firſt parents with his grace: yet it is plain that he did not. Could not the fatal preſent of free-will, which GOD had given him, been re-call'd on ſuch an emergency? would a good mother, who had given leave to her Daughters to go to a ball, not revoke that leave, if ſhe was ſure, that they would yield to enticement and loſe their honour? Or, if ſhe had an infallible preſervative againſt all temptations, that was likewiſe extremely delightful to all that made

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uſe of it, would ſhe ever ſend her daughters to this ball without it?

THE only thing theſe gentlemen keeping to their ſyſtem have left to anſwer is, that GOD would have aſſiſted them with his grace, if he had known what would have happened; but that it is impoſſible to foreſee events that depend upon contingencies. But even this is a poor refuge. Let us carry on the ſame compariſon a little further: if that mother ſhould go to this ball, and through a window ſhould ſee and underſtand, that one of her daughters defends her ſelf but weakly in the corner of a chamber, againſt the ſollicitations of a crafty deceiver; if, even when ſhe ſees, that her daughter is but one ſtep from yielding to the deſires of the tempter, ſhe ſhould not go then to aſſiſt her and deliver her from the ſnare; would the world ſtill count her a good mother? this is a repreſentation of the conduct which the *Socinians* attribute to GOD.

THEY cannot ſay, that he knew the ſin of the firſt man, but as a poſſible event; he knew all the particulars of the temptation, and he muſt needs have known a mo-

a moment before *Eve* yielded, that ſhe was going to deſtroy her ſelf: for they don't deny, but that GOD knew all the thoughts of *Eve*. He did therefore ſuffer her to ſin; and this he did at the ſame time, when he foreſaw that ſhe would certainly ſin.

THE ſin of *Adam* was yet more certainly foreſeen; for the example of *Eve* gave ſome light, the better to foreſee the fall of *Adam*. If GOD had purpoſed to preſerve man and his innocency, and to prevent all the miſeries which were to be the conſequence of ſin, would he not at leaſt have fortify'd the husband after the wife had fall'n? would he not have given him another wife ſound and perfect, inſtead of that which was ſeduced? It is evident therefore, that the *Socinian* ſyſtem, by depriving GOD of preſcience, reduces him to ſlavery and a pitiful form of government; and does not remove the grand difficulty, which it ſhould remove, and which forces theſe hereticks to deny the foreknowledge of contingent events.

A

A predeſtinarian likewiſe labours to as little purpoſe, who, by philoſophical reaſons, endeavours to make good his doctrine, and by dint of argument pretends to clear it from the difficulties it is liable to. When it is objected to him, that his ſyſtem is neceſſarily attended with this conſequence; therefore GOD is the author of ſin; he ought to drop philoſophy, and run to his bible; for here the light of nature will not ſerve him, but to render the charge againſt him the more evident, the more he wrangles, if he has an able antagoniſt. The beſt anſwer he can make is this: I ſee as well as you the connexion of my principle with that conſequence, and my reaſon, that ſees it, does not afford me a ſufficient knowledge to make me underſtand how I am miſtaken in ſeeing it; nevertheleſs I am fully perſuaded, that GOD finds in the infinite treaſures of his power and wiſdom, a certain and moſt infallible way of breaking that connexion, though it be unknown to me, and exceeds the extent of my knowledge.

THIS ought to be the anſwer of a predeſtinarian. But, as we can follow no bet-

ter guides than the apoſtles themſelves, let us examine how St. *Paul* has behaved himſelf in this important matter.

He eſtabliſhes abſolute predeſtination in the plaineſt and conciſeſt manner. *He hath mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth.* Upon this the apoſtle, who knew very well what would naturally be objected againſt ſuch a doctrine, ſtarts the difficulty himſelf, *thou wilt ſay then unto me, Why does he yet find fault? for who has reſiſted his Will?* No *Moliniſt*, nor the moſt acute philoſopher of the *Socinians* could have ſaid any thing to puſh the objection further. And neither St. *Auſtin*, *Luther*, *Calvin*, or any of the *Thomiſts*, *Janſeniſts* have ever ſaid any thing, that God will have men to commit ſin. Which will ſtill be more evident, if we obſerve, that juſt before the apoſtle had put us in mind of the tranſactions between *Moſes* and *Pharaoh*, where we meet with the moſt remarkable inſtance of the divine ſovereignty, that is anywhere extant; as if it had been to hinder us from making any feint and evaſive conſtruction of what he meant by *Hardening*

God

GOD we know had firſt hardened the heart of *Pharaoh* againſt all the threatnings and miracles of *Moſes*, and afterwards puniſhed him for diſobedience. A conduct ſeemingly oppoſite to all our human notions of juſtice and goodneſs. I take notice of this to demonſtrate how remote the apoſtle's thoughts ſeem to have been from mollifying the expreſſion, or denying the fact. All the ſolution he gives to the objection propoſed, is the ſovereign power of GOD, and the right the Creator has to diſpoſe of his creatures as it ſeems good to him, *Nay, but oh man! who art thou that replieſt againſt* GOD? *Shall the thing form'd ſay to him that form'd it, why haſt thou made me thus?* This the apoſtle inſiſts upon, and in the next verſe repeats the ſubſtance of it over again in a compariſon, the moſt adapted to inſpire us with humility and reſignation.

St. *Paul*, inſpired as he was, does not pretend, that he is able to account for it any other way. He is at a loſs himſelf, the great apoſtle of the *Gentiles*, in whom human learning was join'd with divine inſpiration. Mind the philoſophy he makes

uſe of, *O the depth and the riches both of the wiſdom and knowledge of* GOD! *how unſearchable are his judgments, and his ways paſt finding out!* This ought to put an end to all diſputes, and impoſe a profound ſilence on our reaſon. The ſubtleſt logician, or moſt learned theologiſt after this can have no more claim or colour to be dogmatical on this head, than the ſimpleſt ſhepherd, or the moſt illiterate plowman; for in point of penetration into the reveal'd will of GOD, I will not ask leave to affirm, that the ſuperiority which the ableſt divine has over the meaneſt peaſant, is much leſs than what St. *Paul* would have had over the ableſt divine the world has had to boaſt of ſince the time of the apoſtles. Muſt not both parties bluſh, when they pretend to teach with clearneſs what was a myſtery to St. *Paul?*

AS it is ſuperſtition to forge and multiply myſteries without neceſſity, and where, by a juſt interpretation, matters may be made intelligible to us; ſo not to allow things to be myſterious, when the word of GOD expreſly teaches us, that they are ſuch, is no leſs than renouncing

chriſtianity. The *Carpocratians* [a] ſtand accus'd of having plac'd the image of *Ariſtotle* next to that of JESUS CHRIST, and paid equal adoration to both. If the impiety of theſe hereticks ſeem ſtrange, what muſt we ſay to thoſe, who pretend to a profound veneration for a religion altogether built upon myſteries, and at the ſame time refuſe to admit of any thing which they cannot plainly apprehend by the light of nature?

LET me adviſe thoſe idolaters of human underſtanding, not to forget humanity in another ſenſe, and once begin to think of charity and toleration. The impoſſibility there is in our little knowledge of reconciling either the ſyſtem of predeſtination, or that of free-will, to all the neceſſary attributes of GOD, ought, if not to unite men, at leaſt make them deſiſt from quarrelling, and taxing one another with teaching of impious things and horrid blaſphemies. Thoſe who are againſt toleration of either ſide, might be bore with, if they could clearly prove their opinion, and anſwer

[a] Baronius ann. eccleſ. ad annum 120.

all objections after a convincing manner; but that men ſhould anathematiſe, baniſh and hang thoſe that diſſent from them, tho' to defend their own ſyſtem each party is forc'd to fly to GOD's incomprehenſibility, is a thing altogether inexcuſable.

I ſhall leave this ſubject with a bright example of moderation and humanity, not common among divines of different opinions, but which it is greatly the intereſt of every country, that all clergy-men ſhould follow. *Melanchton* was the head of the *Synergiſts*, [a] a ſect of *German* divines in the ſixteenth century, who, thinking that *Luther*'s hypotheſis about free-will was too harſh, taught, that men are not converted by GOD's Grace, without the concourſe of their own will. Every body knows how abſolute a predeſtinarian *Calvin* was, and what clamours were rais'd againſt him on this head, that he was repreſented as having broach'd the moſt monſtrous doctrine, and making GOD the author of ſin in the moſt execrable manner.

[a] Micrelius Syntagm. hiſt. eccleſ.

YET

YET *Melanchton* had a ſincere value and [a] friendſhip for *Calvin*, and wrote in defence of him on ſeveral occaſions. He knew, that that great man abhorr'd the impieties that were laid to his charge, and that in none of his works he had ever aſcrib'd any thing to GOD, but what was juſt and holy; but, that he had taught, that the conduct of GOD ſurpaſſing finite capacities, was not too narrowly to be pry'd into; that his judgments are a myſterious abyſs we ought not to meddle with, and that his ways are incomprehenſible. This *Melanchton* demonſtrated to the other's enemies, always extolling the piety and good intention of *Calvin*, notwithſtanding the diſagreement of their opinions.

CALVIN believ'd, that the ſupreme empire of GOD, and the rights of a providence worthy of the infinite being, required an abſolute predeſtination. *Melanchton* believ'd that the goodneſs, holineſs and juſtice of the ſupreme being requir'd we ſhould be free in our actions.

[a] Beza in vita Calvin. ad ann. 1552.

Theſe were their principles. Both aim'd at the ſame thing, the greateſt glory of GOD. The candid *Melanchton* being convinc'd of this, as well as the difficulty and inexplicableneſs of the matter they differ'd about, was always ready to do *Calvin* juſtice, admired his vaſt parts and erudition, and own'd him for his fellow labourer in the miniſtry of the goſpel.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

Of the CHURCH.

AS no civiliz'd nation ever was without religion, ſo divine worſhip has always been accounted the buſineſs of all mankind, and a duty in which the meaneſt, as well as the higheſt, from the prince to the beggar, are equally concern'd. This, and the reſpect due to the Deity to be ador'd, have been the reaſon that the edifices ſet apart for a general worſhip, were always not only ſpacious, but as ſoon as man could raiſe them, likewiſe fine and ſtately ſtructures. As this muſt make the building of them very expenſive, they are generally rais'd at the publick coſt, and therefore temples are national, and only made uſe of to celebrate that worſhip, that belongs to the national religion, which the government,

ment, and the generality of a country profeſs.

ALL the world takes delight more or leſs in excellency and beauty, every one judging according to his taſte and capacity, and the greateſt part of the multitude have nothing to boaſt of of their own, that exceeds mediocrity; for this reaſon, the common people are fond of every thing that belongs to the publick, which is praiſe-worthy. Here every body counts himſelf a ſharer; when one nation beats another in battle, the whole country rejoice; thoſe who ſtaid at home are as proud of the victory as the conquerors themſelves, and a man that is bed-rid imagines himſelf to have a part in the honour of the day. This conſideration may furniſh us with one reaſon, why the pooreſt people, who, generally ſpeaking, have no extraordinary dwellings to brag of, ſhould have ſuch an exceſſive value for their temples abſtract from religion.

MEN don't ſtand calculating what proportion their perſons bear to the whole, it is ſufficient that they are ſharers, and what is publick, all members of the ſociety have the

the liberty of calling their own; and no human creature can be ſo abject in a country, but he may have the pleaſure of ſaying, our army, our fleet, our government, our funds. It is likewiſe obſerv'd, that the love and value, which from this notable propriety men conceive for things that belong to the whole ſociety, are greater or leſſer, according as thoſe things are either ſoon periſhable or more laſting. One ſtorm deſtroys a whole fleet, an army is often disbanded in a day, and the publick treaſure may ſoon be ſquander'd away or exhauſted by neceſſity; but ſtrong edifices, ſuch as temples and halls remain for many generations. As great lovers as men are of novelty, they look upon it as a weakneſs, and all have a great veneration for things not eaſily alterable, and ſuch as are known to have been of great duration.

It has been ſufficiently ſhewn in the foregoing chapters, that inward religion and ſpiritual devotion, are not what the multitude was ever much affected with. They muſt have ſomething more groſs that employs their ſenſes, and therefore whenever

ever we would ſpeak to the vulgar pathetically about religion, we make uſe of the words, altar and temple, things that are viſible; or elſe ſtrictly ſpeaking, religion it ſelf, eſpecially the chriſtian, has nothing to do with temples, or any building, and therefore our Saviour and his apoſtles preach'd and taught in private houſes, or, when their followers were more numerous, in the open air: they would invade no body's right, and to ſhew, that neither great numbers, nor ſtately ſtructures were of any conſideration as to godlineſs, CHRIST told his diſciples, that where two or three were gathered together in his name, he would be among them.

THE aſſemblies then of the faithful among chriſtians, whether they met in a room or a deſart, were, in the time of the apoſtles, call'd churches, and all that believ'd in CHRIST, whereſoever diſpers'd, were counted members of his univerſal church. As afterwards they encreas'd in numbers, and were favour'd or tolerated by the governors they liv'd under, the chriſtians built many meeting-houſes, which, from the aſſemblies that met there,

were

were in tract of time call'd churches. The ſame name was beſtow'd on ſome of the heathen temples, as ſoon as the pagans were turn'd out, and the chriſtians were poſſeſs'd of them; and upon all changes in government, or publick worſhip, the prieſts in favour, all the world over, as well as in the *Roman* empire, always took care of the temples and their appurtenances. The firſt church dedicated to St. *Paul* in *England*, was originally a pagan temple, built to the honour of *Diana*, and the chief moſque now in *Conſtantinople* was a chriſtian church conſecrated to St. *Sophia*.

THOSE who are but in the leaſt acquainted with the hiſtory of the third, fourth and fifth centuries, cannot be ignorant how often the chriſtian and heathen prieſts drove out one another by turns, according as the religion of the one or the other prevail'd, ſometimes with cruel perſecution, and ſometimes with tolerable moderation, according to the temper of the emperor or his favourites, and muſt know that the chriſtian clergy were as intriguing as other prieſts, nor leſs induſtrious to promote their temporal intereſt, and that

that as ſoon as it was in their power, they encourag'd the building of churches, ſome of them not inferiour to the moſt magnificent pagan temples, of which at laſt they kept for their own uſe, out of prudence, thoſe that had not been demoliſh'd out of zeal.

FROM what I have hinted already we may ſee, that when the name of the church is given to a temple, to the edifice it ſelf erected for divine worſhip, it is done by a figurative way of ſpeaking; but otherwiſe, that the word (by which literally and originally nothing is meant but congregation or aſſembly) in the plaineſt as well as moſt charitable acceptation ſignifies all that believe in CHRIST, of what ſect or perſuaſion ſoever, and includes the laity as well as the clergy. This is undeniable, yet there is hardly a clergyman that will ſubſcribe to it without exception. The ambition, envy and revengeful ſpirit of ſome, together with the vain glory, folly and impiety of others, have made ſuch feuds and diſtractions, rais'd ſuch diſſentions and real animoſities among the ſeveral flocks that have been entruſted to

them; that the piety, wiſdom, eloquence, and all the other great abilities of the reſt have not been able to this hour to hinder chriſtians from refuſing to allow thoſe, that differ from them in opinion, to belong to the church of CHRIST, and every ſect pretends to be the true church, whilſt all the reſt are antichriſt, ſchiſmaticks, or hereticks.

WHAT is generally underſtood by the church in every country, is that religion the government pretends to maintain, and the clergy whereof are in poſſeſſion of the national churches, and their revenues; and here the word includes church government with all the rites and ceremonies, as well as privileges and immunities the clergy can claim by law.

IN this ſenſe the church varies in every country, and there are not two alike in all chriſtendom. So both in *France* and *Spain* the religion is *Roman* catholick; but in *France* they have no inquiſition, they differ from the other in church government, and are not ſo ſlaviſhly ſubject to the pope. At *Venice* again, they have an inquiſition

quiſition as well as in *Spain*, but a noble *Venetian* is always to be preſent at all their tranſactions, and when he leaves them they are no court, which alters the nature of the thing it ſelf. In *England* the religion is proteſtant and epiſcopal; the ſame may be ſaid of ſome *Lutherans*, yet the churches are vaſtly different, as well in doctrine as ceremonies and government.

WHEN church is uſed with reſpect to the religion profeſs'd, as ſuch a one is of the church of *England*, it includes both clergy and laity; but, with reſpect to the government and authority of the church, nothing is underſtood by it, but the clergy alone, for the laity has nothing to do there, but to obey. When indeed the intereſt of the church is mention'd, the word is more comprehenſive, and takes in, beſides the clergy, all thoſe that are well-wiſhers to their temporal welfare and authority, whether they belong to the ſame communion or not. So *Lewis* the XIVth has been look'd upon as the greateſt friend of the church of *England* by many of her clergy; ſeveral popes have been in the proteſtant

teſtant intereſt, and the grand *Turk* has more than once been defender of the faith of the injured churches in *Tranſilvania.*

FOR want of underſtanding theſe various acceptations of the word church, men have often been guilty of impiety, and laid that to the charge of a holy religion, which has been altogether owing to prieſt-craft. The church of Chriſt, as it ſignifies the profeſſors of his religion, was propagated after a miraculous manner, by mean illiterate men, who, by preaching up meekneſs, patience, obedience to the civil magiſtrate, and an intire reſignation to the will of GOD, gain'd multitudes of ſouls without the aſſiſtance of the ſecular power, or any other arms or compulſion whatever: men who recommended every where peace, union and charity, and deſpiſing all worldly intereſt, ventur'd and laid down their lives for the welfare of others.

BUT the church of Chriſt, as it comprehends the extent of juriſdiction, the temporal intereſt and authority of the clergy that profeſs chriſtianity, has been propated by quite contrary means. They diſ-

fer'd and quarrell'd in the first century, persecuted one another in the second; and as soon as it was in their power, and they had insinuated themselves into the favour of princes, they made use of worldly honour and riches, and other artifices to draw men to the church; whilst those, who refus'd to be of their opinion, were with the help of the government compell'd to it by main force without any miracle at all.

If the word church always imply'd religion, the most profligate wretches could never be the greatest sticklers for it; yet this we may observe in almost every nation. Some content themselves with swearing, drinking, and telling lies for the church; but others more zealous perjure themselves, raise rebellion, murder their princes, betray, burn, and destroy their country for the sake of it.

To account for this odd turn of the mind in human creatures, I must desire my reader to look back on what has been said, *pag.* 19 and 20. As hardly any of the multitude are so ignorant, or so wicked as not to have a notion of virtue and vice,

vice, heaven and hell, at leaſt a confus'd one, ſo at one time or other they are troubled with remorſes, they have dreads and perplexities, which are the reaſon that many of them when they find themſelves wholly ſwallow'd up in ſenſuality, and utterly incapable of performing any kind of religious duties, ſeeking relief like drowning men, take hold of a ſtraw, and are ſo ſtupid, as to imagin that to have an affection for the church, the edifice it ſelf, or the name of it, the habit of a clergyman, or any thing ſtill more remote from, and yet in their opinion belonging to religion, will make ſome atonement for all their tranſgreſſions. It comforts them in their anxiety, and makes them eaſy; and it is this that often makes the moſt abandon'd in a nation ſo zealous for the church, without ever going to its ſervice, or obſerving its rules. For, whoever rightly conſiders the force of this ſuperſtitious awe, and adds to it the reaſon I mention'd in the beginning of this chapter, will eaſily perceive, that both join'd together muſt in all multitudes render the eſteem, the veneration, and the fondneſs for the word church as

exceſſive, as without that conſideration it is unaccountable.

THOSE, who diſſent from the national church, or rather ſcruple to comply with the rites and ceremonies of it, are by their teachers continually ſet againſt it; they are told of all the abuſes of it, which none can be without; and from their infancy generally they are encouraged to deſpiſe, and in time, according as their anti-zeal is work'd to a pitch, perhaps brought mortally to hate it. The conſciouſneſs of this averſion to the church has the ſame effect upon the minds of many, that the affection for it has upon others; but notwithſtanding this hatred and contempt ſome may artfully be inſpired with againſt the church, the vulgar are never better pleaſed than when they are poſſeſſed of the national churches. In all countries, where there are religious quarrels, thoſe who hated the very name, whilſt they were kept out of them, are ſoon reconcil'd to them, if upon any turn in the publick worſhip they get the better of their adverſaries. There is a kind of magick in a fine church, that bewitches the mob. They look

look upon it as a rampart againſt hell and the devil: they rely upon it at all events, and ſeem to imagine, that their veneration for it, and conſequently their hatred to them that ſpeak againſt it, is an abſolution from ſin, and a ſecurity to be wicked with impunity.

THAT I have dwelt ſo long on this head ought to ſeem excuſable to all, who conſider, that it is my intention to point out thoſe things to which the court of *Rome* owes its greatneſs, and the firſt is this frailty of the vulgar; on which have been built all the ſplendor and temporal authority, not only of the *Pagan* churches, but likewiſe the *Mahometan* and that of *Rome*. The next, and which is not ſufficiently to be admired, is the unconceivable induſtry, to which may be join'd the heroiſm of the clergy, who from the moſt barren ſoil have made the fatteſt land in the world. One cannot reflect without amazement on the inexhauſtible treaſure actually in poſſeſſion of, and the boundleſs power in temporals, claim'd by the ſucceſſors of the apoſtles; and yet nothing in nature can ſeem leſs capable of yielding ſuch

ſuch a product than the goſpel. To illuſtrate what I mean by the heroiſm of the clergy, I ſhall give ſome few inſtances of it from the multitude which hiſtory abounds with.

'Tis a difficult task to controul great men and favourites of princes, and always hazardous to rebuke the mighty: yet the daring St. *Ambroſe* [a] oppoſed the emperor himſelf. As *Theodoſius* was coming to church at *Milan*, that gallant biſhop ſtopped him, and made him do penance with all humility, before he would ſuffer him to enter into it. To conceive rightly the danger, and conſequently the bravery of this action, we ought to know, that ſuch another attempt had been made once before at *Antioch* by St. *Babylas* [b] with very ill ſucceſs. St. *Chryſoſtom*, tho' he was miſtaken in the name [c] of the emperor, and the crime laid to his charge, has more than once diſplay'd his

[a] Eraſm. Epiſt. 3. *lib.* 28. & Epiſt. 69. *lib.* 29.

[b] Euſeb. hiſt. eccleſ. *l.* 6. *c.* 34.

[c] *St.* Chryſoſtom. *Homily on St.* Babylas, item contra gentiles, & aliis in locis.

uſual

uſual eloquence in the praiſe of that martyr.

THE characteriſticks of chriſtianity have abundantly teſtify'd the divinity of our religion; and obedience to ſuperiors, and the civil magiſtrate, with a peaceful diſpoſition and charity to all men, ſo much recommended by the goſpel, have ever been the ſureſt means to propagate it; but the early zeal of churchmen has often looked upon them as ſlow ones, and their power has been rais'd by more active virtues than patience under perſecution, and conſtancy in death. Chriſtians have often been the aggreſſors, even when they were ſtrangers and lived upon ſufferance. In the time of *Theodoſius* junior, they enjoy'd a full liberty of conſcience in *Perſia*, when [a] *Abdas*, a zealous biſhop, had the courage to pull down one of the temples where the *Perſians* worſhip'd the fire. The *Magi* made their complaints to the King, who ſent for *Abdas*, and demanded no other ſatisfaction than the rebuilding of the

[a] Theodor. Hiſt. eccleſ. *lib.* 5. *c.* 39.

tem-

temple: [a] *Abdas* refus'd it with ſcorn, tho' that prince had declar'd to him, that in caſe of diſobedience he would cauſe all the chriſtian churches to be pull'd down; which he did, and began a terrible perſecution, in which the valiant *Abdas* fell the firſt martyr.

THE brave remainder of the faithful, that could eſcape the fury of the *Perſian* prieſts, were not ſo dejected at their loſs, but that, animated with the hopes of a noble revenge, they implored the aſſiſtance of the emperor, which kindling a long war [b] between the *Romans* and *Perſians*, occaſion'd a ſecond deluge of blood in vindication of the goſpel.

FROM theſe and other examples it is evident, that the church has not been wanting to ſhew her fortitude in attacking her enemies, and redreſſing misfortunes; nor has ſhe neglected to improve her ſucceſſes. It is this reſtleſs application, by which ſhe is arriv'd to that height of worldly glory and ſovereignty. To put a

[a] Theodor. & Socrat. hiſt. Eccleſ.

[b] Socrat. hiſt. Eccleſ. *lib.* 7. *c.* 18.

crown

crown on the head of a kneeling prince, and immediately with a foot to kick it down again, may be cenſur'd in a biſhop as an action on ſuch ſolemnities more familiar than polite; but it is an expreſſive emblem of ſupremacy, which nothing but treading on the necks of princes could exceed: the lordly enſigns of ſuperlative grandeur which every body knows the *Roman* pontiffs have diſplay'd in theſe inſtances and a hundred more; yet, what is moſt wonderful, all the temporals, the ſucceſſors of St. *Peter* are poſſeſs'd of, have been obſtinately diſputed, and ſuch by inch got from the laity: not excepting wh. they lay claim to by virtue of the donation of *Conſtantine*, which has been ridicul'd even by *Italian* poets.

NOTHING is more diverting than to read the various and noble ſtruggles the popes have had with the princes of chriſtendom, till *Gregory* the ſeventh, with the utmoſt intrepidity, and equal hazard and difficulties, eſtabliſh'd his ſuperiority over their temporalities: that able and ſtately prelate, who, in the midſt of winter,

made an emperor [a] barefoot wait [b] unattended in a hall, faſting from morning till night, for three days together, before he would admit him to his preſence; [c] and was the firſt, who undertook to deprive his lord and maſter of the imperial dignity. There is hardly an emperor to be named, who has oppoſed the pope, and has not been a ſufferer at laſt; and it is incredible what indignities ſome princes have endured from them. The moſt valiant, the craftieſt, and the moſt reſolute, have been overmatched by them. *Henry* the fourth of *France*, as great as he was, was forc'd to ſubmit to the chaſtiſement, [d] which, whilſt the fifth *pſalm* was ſinging, *Clement* the eighth, from his throne, inflicted by the ſtroke of a ſwitch at each verſe, on the perſons of his proxies, as they lay kneeling and bending down their heads before him. The ſame ceremony,

[a] Henry *the fourth.*

[b] Maimbourg decadence de l'empire. *l.* 3.

[c] *Some add, that he waited with ſciſſars, and a broom in his hands, as ſubmitting to be ſhorn and whipt*; du Pleſſis myſtére de iniquité.

[d] Botero's Commentar.

[a] it

[a] it is ſaid, was repeated more privately between the legate and his majeſty's perſon.

When the luſtre of a church is once eſtabliſhed, the homage, which is reckon'd her due, ceaſes not to be paid to her even in adverſity. *Leo* the tenth, before his pontificate, when he was legate to *Julius* the ſecond, was in the army that was beaten by the *French* at *Ravenna*. Whilſt he was a priſoner, cardinal *Palavicini* tells us, [b] the conquering ſoldiers expreſs'd ſo great a veneration for him, that they humbly begg'd pardon for their victory, beſeech'd him to give them abſolution, and promis'd never more to bear arms againſt the pope. This brings to mind another, but more noble example of the vaſt reſpect and ſubmiſſive awe, which the very ſight of a prelate and his pontifical ornaments have imprinted, not upon the children of the church, but *Barbarians*, cruel perſecutors, and her greateſt enemies.

[a] D' Aubigné.

[b] Palavic. iſtoria del concilio di Trente.

ATTILA having [a] reduc'd *Aquileia* almoſt to aſhes, ravaged all upon his march from thence even to *Pavia* and *Milan*, and now he had made himſelf maſter of thoſe two great cities, and treated them as he had done the reſt, laying them both in rubbiſh. So many diſmal meſſages arriving upon the back of one another at *Rome* caus'd a great conſternation. The ſenate was aſſembled to deliberate, whether the emperor ſhould quit *Italy*; for to defend *Rome* againſt that innumerable multitude of *Barbarians* ſeem'd utterly impoſſible. Nothing at laſt was thought more adviſable, than to ſend an honourable embaſſy to *Attila*, with the pope at the head of it.

ACCORDINGLY *Leo* the firſt undauntedly went out in ſolemn pomp to meet him. The *Goth* was ſtruck with the appearance, obey'd the prieſt, and retir'd inſtantly with his whole army in a panick fear. *Attila* was afterwards aſhamed of his weakneſs, which to palliate he had invention enough, or others for him, to

[a] Maimbourg decadence de l' empire.

make

make a miraculous ſtory of it: alledging, that, during the time *Leo* ſpoke, he ſaw a venerable old man ſtand by his ſide, who, holding a naked ſword in his hand, threaten'd to kill him, unleſs he granted all the pope deſired. A pitiful excuſe for a conqueror at the head of his army! the dreadful *Attila*, the ſcourge of GOD, the enemy to mankind, whoſe ſight alone ſtruck terrour into the moſt undaunted, and whoſe very name made all the earth to tremble.

IN the next chapter I ſhall endeavour to prove, that the policies and worldly wiſdom of the clergy have been employ'd as ſucceſsfully for the temporal advancement of the church, as their heroiſm; and with all theſe helps the raiſing of the church to what it is from ſuch a beginning ought ſtill to be look'd upon as the greateſt atchievement that human ſtrength has to boaſt of.

THE *Pagans*, whoſe religion was built upon poetry and fiction, had a wretched theology, that might be turn'd to any purpoſe, and the prieſts in their contrivances had no morals to cope with. In mahome-

tiſm there is more morality, and the notions of the Deity are better; both which it is in all probability beholding for to the goſpel: but then the whole religion ſeems contriv'd to engage the ſenſual and voluptuous: in the alcoran it ſelf many things are ludicrous and ſilly, and not a few that are ſoothing human paſſion. But in the chriſtian religion all is grave and ſolid; every part of it is worthy of the moſt ſerious contemplation of a man, that can and dares think freely and thoroughly. The idea it furniſhes us with of the Godhead is ſublime, and as incomprehenſible as it ſhould be: in the doctrine of Chriſt there are no worldly allurements to draw the vicious, and all his followers are ty'd down to the ſtricteſt morality: the whole aim of the goſpel is divine, nothing in it can poſſibly be conſtrued ſo as to encourage prieſtcraft, or be ſerviceable to ſooth any human paſſion, without doing the utmoſt violence to truth and good ſenſe; and yet behold, what has been made of it!

WHEN we conſider, that the holy founder of our religion commanded frugality,

gality, embraced poverty, diſclaim'd as well as contemn'd riches and earthly dominion, and told all mankind in expreſs words, that his kingdom was not of this world. When we conſider this, I ſay, is it eaſily underſtood, which way, and on what foot thoſe, who dare call themſelves his vicars, ſhould have made themſelves in the face of the ſun temporal princes, who live magnificently and luxuriouſly, and pretend by their function to be inveſted not only with holineſs and abſolute knowledge, (which they may ſay came by inheritance) but what the apoſtles never thought of, an unlimited juriſdiction, and general maſterſhip over all things under heaven? they alſo ſuppoſe themſelves the fountain of worldly honour, and beſtow titles on ſovereigns, or take them away at pleaſure. That of moſt chriſtian king, [a] *Julius* the ſecond is ſaid to have once been deliberating to deprive *Lewis* the twelfth of, and transfer it on our king *Henry* the eighth.

[a] Guiccairdin, *lib.* 11.

THE Roman [a] *Pontiff, ſays* Allatius one of the library-keepers of the vatican, *holds of no body, he judges every body, and is judged by none; obedience is to be paid to him, altho' he governs unjuſtly; he gives laws without receiving any, he alters them as he pleaſes. he creates magiſtrates, determines matters of faith; he orders the great affairs of the church as he pleaſes; he cannot err if he would, for no infidelity nor illuſion can come near him; and if an angel ſhould ſay otherwiſe, being ſtor'd as he is with the authority of* JESUS CHRIST, *he cannot change.*

WHAT an extravagant power is this in human creatures! yet it is demonſtrable, that nothing is more adventitious, and altogether owing to fruitful invention, than the infallibility of the pope. By teſtament the clergy cannot have it from the apoſtles, who own'd, that they had doubts themſelves; nor will any man imagine, that they have derived it from the ſcriptures; when a cardinal [b] writes in de-

[a] Allatius de perpetua conſenſione *lib.* 1. *cap.* 2.
[b] *Cardinal* Hoſius.

fence

ſence [a] of a controvertiſt, who aſſerted, *that was it not for the authority of the church, he would pay no greater regard to the bible, than he had for Æſop's fables*; ſo that in the opinion of this clergy-man the ſcriptures receive all their ſanction from the church, and therefore not the church from the ſcriptures. This I think is reaſoning conſequentially, though at firſt view there may ſeem to be leſs weight than ſubtilty in the thought.

BUT, be this as it will, there is no proteſtant that will not concur with me in what I have ſaid, that may be diſpleaſing to the church, if I only mean that of *Rome*; but he'll be very angry, and perhaps endeavour to have me puniſhed by the law, ſhould I apply any part of it to the church he belongs to, and which he believes to be that of CHRIST; it would be much the ſame, whether I did it in *England*, in *Holland*, or in *Sweden*; and it is not more ſurpriſing to ſee how vaſtly proteſtants differ from one another, than it is to obſerve, how unanimouſly they agree in one

[a] Hoſius, *lib.* 3. in prolegom. Brentii.

thing

thing with the church they ſprung from, which is, that, to vindicate the religion they profeſs, beſides their proofs from ſcripture, and the abilities of their divines, all deſire to have the aſſiſtance of the ſecular power, and there is no ſect of proteſtants, where their opinion is the uppermoſt, that is not as willing to make uſe of it on all occaſions as the papiſts themſelves.

In the religious diſputes in *Holland*, it has been practiſed long ago: the *Gommarians* incited the princes of *Orange* againſt the *Arminians*, and made uſe of the civil power at the ſynod of *Dort*, with little appearance of moderation. Other ſynods afterwards have been very zealous in ſetting the ſtates againſt the *Socinians*, ſeveral of their books have been burnt, and their authors baniſh'd.

In the time of *Edward* the ſixth, *Laſcus* and *Micronius* [a] were miniſters of the *Dutch* church at *London*; being forc'd upon

[a] Samuel Andreas *Profeſſor of divinity at* Marpurg, *relates this in his* Epiſtola Gratulatoria & Apologetica, *againſt the* Dania Orthodoxa fidelis & pacifica *of* Maſius, *Divinity Profeſſor at* Copenhagen.

that

that king's death to leave *England*, they endeavour'd to eſtabliſh themſelves and their flock in *Denmark*, but the *Lutherans* oppos'd it, and alledging, that their doctrine ſtood condemn'd by the confeſſion of *Augsburg*, forc'd them to retire out of the kingdom in the midſt of winter. *Micronius* ſome time after at *Hamburg* conferr'd with one *Weſtphalus* a *Daniſh* divine, who immediately urg'd the conſent of the *Saxon* churches as an invincible argument againſt the *Calviniſts*. *Micronius* anſwer'd, that if the truth of opinions was to be determin'd by the conſent of churches, the papal cauſe would be triumphant. *Weſtphalus* reply'd, that the *Saxon* churches were the church of GOD; and when the other urg'd that the church was not confin'd to any place, and that there was no church but what might poſſibly err, as was allow'd by *Luther*: he reply'd, that the import of *Luther*'s words was not that the church of JESUS CHRIST could be miſtaken, but that the popiſh church might. *Micronius* forgot not to tell him, that the holy ſcripture is the ſole rule of faith, and inſiſting upon this continually, he was plainly anſwer'd,

ſwer'd, it follows from your arguments, that his *Daniſh* majeſty and the ſenate of our city, who have decreed againſt you, ſhould be guilty of a great fault; conſider that you are condemn'd by A DYET of *Augsburg*.

IT is plain what *Weſtphalus* would inſinuate, and this we ſhall find throughout the world, that the national clergy in all countries endeavour to render it a crime againſt the ſtate, how remote ſoever it be from it, to ſeek or believe what claſhes with their ſyſtem, and they cannot anſwer themſelves. The arguments by which all churches in power prove their divinity, when they appeal to the ſenſes, have a near reſemblance together.

THE defenders of the religion of old *Rome*, in the beginning of chriſtianity, boaſted of the antiquity of their religion, the vaſt extent of it, the victories that had been gain'd by the aſſiſtance of their gods, and the miracles that had been wrought for them: theſe they ſaid were things viſible, and from ſo many excellencies, in which none came near them, they maintain'd that theirs was the true religion.

gion. The church of new *Rome*, after fifteen hundred years ſtanding, has often made uſe of the ſame proofs ever ſince the reformation, but not always with ſo much juſtice in appearance as the *Pagans*. For as to victories, it is but an hundred years ago, that on a fair account the ballance would have been on the ſide of the *Mahometans*: and as to extent of dominion, the chriſtians are exceeded by the ſame *Mahometans*, though both of them together, in this article, cannot come up to the *Heathens*, even at this day. For to divide the globe in thirty equal parts, by the beſt computation, ſix are reckon'd to be *Chriſtian*, ſeven *Mahometan*, and all the reſt *Pagan*.

WHICH of the proteſtant communions ought to be call'd the true church of Chriſt, a man may be ſooner convinc'd of within, than he can demonſtrate it to an adverſary. But be the religion of a country what it will, it is always certain, that the greater the authority of the church is, the better the clergy are pleaſed; and it fails as ſeldom, that, wherever it is exceſſive, the laity are ſlaves, and the government

vernment precarious, unleſs it be in the hands of the clergy themſelves. Of this the ſtate of the church in *Italy* is a flagrant inſtance; for throughout the patrimony of St. *Peter*, the prieſts are abſolute maſters, and have all the fat of the land. The churches are magnificent and crouded with treaſure, but the laity are poor, and the common people, in houſes and furniture, diet and cloaths, and all the other valuable comforts of life, the moſt miſerable in chriſtendom, in the moſt happy ſoil and climate upon earth.

DURING the happineſs of the *Jews*, before they had kings, GOD rul'd over them more immediately himſelf; or elſe theſe are the fruits of a hierarchy, which all governments muſt degenerate into, where the ſtate, unmindful of its own ſafety, takes not a ſufficient care to guard it ſelf both againſt the ſly and bold encroachments of the church, and either wants ſtrength, skill, or reſolution, to keep the clergy of all ſorts in due bounds of obedience.

THOSE who conſult hiſtory, or will but read *Herodotus*, or *Diodorus Siculus*, will

will be convinc'd, that I do not deceive my reader: they will find that the *Ægyptian* prieſthood being in ancient times the moſt numerous in the univerſe, had a third [a] part of the country in poſſeſſion, and at laſt arrived to ſuch a height, as in a manner to have ſwallow'd up the ſtate. That the Magi in *Perſia* actually chang'd the crown into a mitre [b] and had once a fair chance for the univerſal ſway of the world. In the wide *Æthiopian* empire likewiſe they'll find, that the authority of the hierarchy has been ſo exorbitant, that the prieſt uſurp'd an arbitrary power over the lives of all the laity, their [c] kings not excepted.

DOMINION ever follows property: thus it has been; thus it will be: manners and cuſtoms may change, but human nature is much the ſame in all ages. Perhaps it never was try'd, but elſe one might defy the moſt learned champion of the clergy, to produce from *Adam*, to this day, one ſingle inſtance, of a nation of

[a] Diod. Sic. *lib.* 1.
[b] Herodot. *lib.* 3.
[c] Diod. Sic. *lib.* 3.

note,

note, where the clergy had the deference paid to them, which the generality of them desire, and were suffer'd as much to aggrandize themselves as they pretended their religion required, for fifty years together, which upon due examination would not be found to have been enslaved by the church before half that time was expired. On this head there is no difference between protestants and papists: rigid *Geneva* it self affords us a remarkable instance, [a] wherein a dispute between the church and state, pursued with warmth and obstinacy on both sides, the clergy got the better of the government in a point of authority, and the magistrate was forc'd to yield, at the very beginning of the reformation.

AMONGST those communions of protestants, that never yet had any government or national society of their sentiments, the teachers in general, I know, loudly exclaim against the pomp and temporal authority of the clergy: as many of them are men of worth and probity, so I doubt not, but their intentions may be honest: but I

[a] *See the tenth chapter toward the latter end.*

must

muſt deſire ſuch well deſigning leaders not to boaſt too much of their maiden humility, before they have been tried. A woman may be conſcious to her ſelf, that ſhe is chaſte, tho' ſhe never was ask'd to be otherwiſe; but ſhe can claim no merit in having kept her virginity, if it never was in her choice to part with it.

WHAT ſect or perſuaſion of chriſtians has a better goſpel to preach, or a more diſintereſted, and well meaning principle to walk by, than what the church of *Rome* had her origin from? Wealth and power are tempting, they are ſnares to all manner of virtues, and the ſincereſt man alive cannot warrant for himſelf, or promiſe before hand, what his behaviour will be, when his circumſtances ſhall ceaſe to be the ſame.

CHAP. VII.

Of the Politicks of the CHURCH.

THE immortality of the ſoul, tho' it had been ſolidly aſſerted by *Plato*, and treated of by divers philoſophers before him; yet it remain'd a diſputable point among men of the greateſt penetration many years after: but whatever ſentiments men entertain'd of the ſoul's continuance after death, the notions they had of another life were either very confus'd, or very mean and fabulous before the light of the goſpel appear'd; and CHRIST was the firſt, who plainly taught, that men ſhall riſe again, and in another world be puniſhed or rewarded for ever, according as their behaviour has been in this life. If we conſider on the one hand the vaſt diſproportion between the momentary duration of this life,

life, and eternity, and on the other, that the joys of heaven prepar'd for the juſt, and the torments of hell to be endured by the wicked, ſhall both be ſo exquiſite, as to exceed all imagination; in all which our Saviour likewiſe has fully inſtructed us; if we conſider, I ſay, theſe things, we ſhall find, that no argument could be invented more cogent, to make men of ſound reaſon to bear for ſo ſhort a ſpace with any ſuffe-rings, that might be ſerviceable to attain ſuch a bliſs, and reject all pleaſures, that might lead to ſuch miſeries.

THE natural conſequence that ought to be expected from ſuch a doctrine is, what the goſpel exacts from us, the ſtric-teſt morality, with an abſolute reſignation to the will of GOD; yet it has been made ſubſervient to every bad purpoſe, and all manner of wickedneſs: when once men were thoroughly perſuaded of rewards and puniſhments in the world to come, the clergy left no ſtone unturn'd, to make them believe likewiſe, that the prieſts, as being the favourites of GOD, were the ſole in-terpreters, as well as keepers of the ſacred oracles, and every man's cauſe would be

managed in heaven, according as they ſhould accuſe or intercede for them. If this they could compaſs, they knew very well, that the maſtery over every man's liberty, as well as purſe, could not be diſputed by them. Would ſenſual men, who beſtow ſo much on their pleaſures, not pay for the enjoyment of them with impunity, or the rich leave any paſſion ungratify'd; if they firmly believed, that money, tho' not parted with till after death, would atone for their ſins?

How ſhamefully the church of *Rome* has play'd upon the ſuperſtition of the laity, and how little care at laſt they took to cover their avarice, is amazing. In the pontificate of *Leo* the tenth, the ordinary revenues not being ſufficient to feed the luxury of his court and enrich his ſiſter likewiſe, great ſums were raiſed by farming out indulgences, and other branches of the ſacred funds, which made thoſe, who had advanced the money, put them off in ſuch vaſt quantities, that in many places in *Germany*, ſays [a] *Guicciardin*, the powers

[a] Guicciard. *lib.* 3.

to releaſe ſouls from purgatory were play'd for in taverns and eating-houſes. But as improvements are made in all crafts, the *Mahometans* have outdone the *Roman* prieſts in the way of aſſurance, if it be true what I have read, that the prince of *Baſſora* ſells places in paradice, which in goodneſs ſhall anſwer what price their faithful are pleaſed to beſtow; and at the payment of the money, ſigns policies for them, that give great content.

I ſhall ſay nothing of the ſham miracles, and prodigies, voices pretended to come from heaven, ſaints and devils perſonated by friars, letters ſent from the virgin *Mary* her ſelf; the counterfeiting of relicks, and the impudent multiplication of them; of all which ſo many inſtances now are known, that would have remained ſecrets, if prieſts had never fallen out. I ſhall omit likewiſe the artifices uſed in exorciſms, murders committed, and other villainous pranks that have been play'd between monks of different orders, to ſpoil one another's trade. The tricks and ſtratagems of clerick invention have been as vile as they are innumerable, and I care not

not to rake in that *Augean* ſtable: no *Herculean* labour will be ever able to clear it; becauſe the forgeries of prieſts, when once received for truths, are almoſt immortal. They are monſters of ſtink and darkneſs, that may grow ſick at the appearance of light, and faint away at the ſcent of knowledge, but ſeldom die, whilſt they have a relation left to take care of them.

ST. *AMABLE*, who lived in the fifth century, is the patron of *Riom*, a city in *Auvergne*: it is reported of him, that going to *Rome* on foot, the ſun waited on him as a ſervant, and carried his cloak and his gloves in the air like an umbrella, during the great heat, and kept off the rain from him in bad weather. The wiſer ſort of *Roman* catholicks have long ago rejected this as a fable: yet the tradition is accounted ſo certain in that country, that they ſeldom draw St. *Amable*'s picture, without his gloves and his cloak, being ſupported in the air by a ſun-beam. How great an affront ſoever this ſtory may ſeem to put on human underſtanding, yet it was once ſwallow'd as a fact; and

who

who ever would reflect on the wit of the age, it was believ'd in, I desire he would not forget the modesty of those, who imposed it upon the people.

It is the common opinion, that the Wars and devastations, occasion'd by the frequent irruptions of the *Goths* and *Vandals*, introduced barbarism into *Italy*, and were the only cause of that profound ignorance, that so universally overspread the empire for several ages: but this is wronging the clergy, who thoroughly understanding their interest assisted the growth of it with so much application: nothing was more obnoxious to all their enterprizes, than the *Pagan* philosophers as well as historians, and the good sense contain'd in their works. Knowledge is the bane of priest-craft; which made some prelates, as soon as it was in their power, behave themselves against all human literature, and every thing belonging to arts and sciences, with an uncommon rage. They burnt some of the best books, destroy'd pictures of inestimable value, broke, mutilated, and defaced the finest pieces of sculpture, and made away with, or buried

under

under ground, the nobleſt remainders of antiquity; and once all the writings that were not the product of chriſtian authors, are ſaid to have been in danger of being committed to the flames by one [a] of the greateſt ſaints of the church, I mean *Gregory* the firſt, ſirnamed *the great*; whoſe inveteracy againſt paganiſm and learning, was ſo exceſſive, that he not only was angry with an archbiſhop [b] of *Vienna*, for ſuffering grammar to be taught in his dioceſs, but ſtudied to write bad latin himſelf, and in one of his letters boaſted, that he ſcorned to conform to the rule of grammar, not in any thing to reſemble a heathen.

In purſuance of this refin'd policy, the clergy has refus'd to recede an inch from what had been gain'd on the credulity of the laymen; and whoever attempted to undeceive the people, was always looked upon as a falſe brother, and render'd odious to the world. Whoever imagines from

[a] Vita D. Georg. ex Joanne Laziardo Cœleſtin.

[b] Maimbourg Hiſtoire du Pontificat de Saint Gregoire.

what

what he has read laſt, that I endeavour to make alluſions to latter times, knows not my aim; for to point at particular perſons is what I would avoid the moſt: I deſpiſe the very thoughts of a party-man, and deſire to touch no man's ſore, but in order to heal it. What I now charge the clergy with in general, they have been guilty of before the middle of the fifth century, and above ten thouſand times ſince.

BEFORE the age I ſpeak of, the then orthodox church had begun to reap the fruits from the ſeed of ignorance ſhe cultivated with ſo much care, and now among other dealings made a vaſt profit from her traffick in relicks and the charity of devotees, that came to viſit the ſhrines of the dead. *Vigilantius*, a *Spaniſh* prieſt thought this an abuſe, as well as the prayers for the dead, and taught the people, what any of the apoſtles would have juſtified, that no religious honour was due to the aſhes of ſaints and martyrs.

HOW this was reliſh'd by the church, we may gueſs from the extravagant expreſſions, in which St. *Jerom* vented his

anger againſt him: in one place he calls him [a] *Samaritan*, jew, filthy wretch, whoſe tongue ought to be cut out, and a furious monſter, that ought to be bound. I know, ſays he in another, [b] what makes you write as you do. *It is the unclean ſpirit, that dwells in you, who is tormented by, and therefore dreads to approach the duſt of thoſe holy ſepulchres.*

ANOTHER piece of cleric policy is their ſticking cloſe, and obſtinately adhering to their friends, whether good men or bad. The church is a bountiful and indulgent mother, that rewards well thoſe, who really ſerve her, and connives at all faults in her children, but diſobedience and want of reſpect to her ſelf. Whoever takes her part need not fear her anger; and the greateſt profligate, if he'll promote her temporal intereſt, ſhall always command her good word. What incenſe of praiſe has been formerly, and is yet beſtow'd on the firſt chriſtian emperor, as if he had been the beſt of men? and

[a] Hieronim. Epiſt. ad Riparium.
[b] Idem Epiſt. adverſ. vigilant.

yet it is manifeſt he was a wicked prince. I would not rely on the heathen [a] authors, who ſaid, that *Conſtantine* finding no ways to expiate the execrable murders he had been guilty of, in the *Pagan* religion, but finding ſome in the chriſtian, he forſook that of his anceſtors, and made himſelf a chriſtian. This we'll ſay was a falſe accuſation, but I can't help obſerving from it, that, whilſt that emperor was alive, and all the world was acquainted with his actions, there could have been no room for this calumny had *Conſtantine* been a good man.

EUSEBIUS wrote his life, which is full of encomiums upon him, but leaves [b] out, that he had put to death his wife *Fauſta*, and his own ſon *Criſpus*, from no other motive but jealouſy and revenge. In his chronicles indeed he relates it; but other fathers again have ſtrove to ſtifle thoſe facts, which every body knew to be true. In refuting the heathen authors I

[a] Soſipater *and others, whom* Sozomen *and* Evagrius *have wrote againſt.*

[b] Baronius ad ann. 324.

ſpoke of before, *Evagrius* [a] had the courage plainly to deny them: *Sozomen* had more caution; but being likewiſe unwilling to acknowledge them, he talks of ſomething elſe, and only [b] proves, that *Criſpus* and *Fauſta* could not have been put to death but many years after *Conſtantine* had abjur'd the *Pagan* religion.

CARDINAL *Baronius* juſtly blames the writers of eccleſiaſtical hiſtory, who have ſuppreſs'd, or endeavour'd to refute thoſe matters of fact, and makes a heavy buſtle about it; which that the reader may not wonder at in a cardinal, eſpecially ſuch a high-flying one, I muſt acquaint him, that he did it not for nothing, and only expoſed the nakedneſs of the fathers, becauſe it ſerv'd his turn to ſupport ſome traditions which are favourable to the ſee of [c] *Rome*. As the fathers, who laid the foundation of the temporal bleſſings of

[a] Evagr. Hiſt. Eccleſ. *lib.* 3. *c.* 41.

[b] Sozom. Hiſt. Eccleſ. *lib.* 1. *c.* 5.

[c] *He makes uſe of it to confirm the Acts of Pope* Silveſter, *and to prove, that* Conſtantine *was baptized at* Rome *by this Pope a little before the Celebration of the Council of* Nice. *See the Remark* B. *of the Article* Fauſta in Baile's Dict.

the church, prais'd their benefactors, ſo the ſons have paid their acknowledgments to the fathers, and moſt of their lives, that have been written by modern divines, are rather panegyricks than hiſtories. *Hannibal* had but one eye, yet a flattering limner painted him with both: this *Hannibal* diſlik'd, but was very well pleaſed with another, who drew him in *profile*, an ingenious way of hiding a man's blind-ſide without offending truth. The generality of the clergy ſtand not upon ſuch niceties, and ſcorn to be ſtinted in their commendations: when they have a favourite of the church to paint, they'll draw him with two eyes, though all the world knows he has none.

GREGORY the great, as cruel a perſecutor as he was of human wit, uſed more moderation in forcing men to the goſpel, than was generally practis'd in thoſe days: he likewiſe made [a] a great reform in the lives of the clergy, whoſe lewdneſs was exceſſive, puniſhed their incontinence with

[a] Maimbourg hiſtoire du Pontific. de S. Gregoire.

rigour, and was very ſevere [a] againſt calumny. He undertook the converſion of this kingdom, and happily effected it by the monks he ſent us under the conduct of *Auguſtin* their abbot. In the whole he is reckon'd to have been a man of ſtrict morals, and one of the beſt of popes. But how little virtue or piety are regarded, even by clergymen of good repute, when the intereſt of the church is concern'd, we ſhall learn from a ſhocking inſtance in the life of this great pontiff.

THE emperor *Maurice*'s army being revolted againſt him at the inſtigation of *Phocas*, march'd towards *Conſtantinople*, and took it without any difficulty. The emperor [b] was deliver'd to *Phocas*, who, by an unheard of cruelty, caus'd five little princes, *Maurice*'s children, to be murder'd in his preſence, before their father's eyes. The nurſe of the youngeſt had cunningly retrieved him from the maſſacre, and ſubſtituted her own in his place; but *Maurice*, who perceiv'd it, caus'd his own

[a] Idem ubi ſupra.
[b] Idem.

child

child to be return'd to the executioners. *Phocas* no ways moved with ſo brave and generous an action, which melted all the aſſiſtants into tears, commanded this little innocent to be kill'd, and *Maurice* himſelf butcher'd upon the bodies of his five children.

THE eldeſt ſon of the emperor had a little before been ſent into *Perſia*, but being taken at *Nitæa*, was put to death, as were almoſt all the friends and relations of *Maurice*, and even the empreſs *Conſtantina*, and her three daughters, contrary to the promiſe *Phocas* had made to the patriarch *Cyriacus*. There never was more innocent blood ſhed in any reign than in his, nor a more infamous [a] tyrant than *Phocas*; a deform'd wretch, of a frightful aſpect, without virtue, birth, honour, or merit: he was a drunkard, laſcivious, void of humanity, and had all the ill qualities that may be ſet in oppoſition to thoſe, which the hiſtorians have extremely [b] praiſed in *Maurice*.

[a] Idem.
[b] Ibidem.

As ſoon as it was known at *Rome* what had happen'd at *Conſtantinople*, and this monſter was crown'd there, our holy pope ſent congratulatory letters [a] to *Phocas* and *Leontia* his wife, wherein he rejoic'd for his acceſſion to the throne, as the greateſt advantage that could have happen'd to the empire; ſpeaking of the uſurper in the moſt advantageous terms, as of an admirable prince, who would make it flouriſh again, and thank'd GOD, that the world being deliver'd from ſo hard and uneaſy a yoke, began to enjoy the ſweets of liberty under his reign; without adding one ſyllable to expreſs the leaſt ſorrow, that *Maurice* and his children had ſuffer'd death. The end of this baſe flattery was, what excuſes all faults, the intereſt of the church. *Maurice* had declar'd for the patriarch of *Conſtantinople*, in a diſpute concerning ſuperiority; the pope overjoy'd to be deliver'd from an emperor, who had favour'd the patriarch of *Conſtantinople*, load-

[a] *Dr.* Cave, Hiſt. liter. Scriptor, Eccleſ. ad ann. 603.

ed

ed this new prince with praiſes, to draw him over to his ſide.

THE exceſſive complaiſance of this ſame ſaint to queen *Brunehauld* of *France*, may ſerve as another evidence of the church's ſmall regard for truth, and her adherence to her friends with an affection ſo unmoveable, that no crimes or impiety can ſhake it. This queen, as moſt hiſtorians ſay, was the moſt [a] wicked woman in the world, yet St. *Gregory* beſtow'd upon her all the praiſes that can be given to the moſt perfect princeſs, and ſcrupled not to ſay in a very poſitive [b] manner, that *France* was, of all nations, the moſt happy, ſince they deſerv'd ſuch a queen endu'd with all ſorts of virtues and good qualities. What occaſioned his eſteem for the worſt of women was, that *Brunehauld*, in the midſt of her heinous crimes, ſhew'd an extraordinary [c] magnificence, towards churchmen, and in her foundations of churches and convents, not forgetting to make a devout requeſt for relicks to the holy father.

[a] Maimbourg ubi ſupra.
[b] George. *lib.* 11. *epiſt.* 8.
[c] Maimbourg hiſt. du Pontif. de. S. Greg.

WHAT

WHAT *Philip de Comines* says [a], was answer'd to him in *Italy*, will not seem foreign to our purpose. In the *Carthusian* monastery at *Pavia*, lies the body of *John Galeazzo*, a great and wicked tyrant: *Comines*, who went to see it, hearing one of the *Carthusians* that shew'd it him, call him saint, whisper'd him in the ear, and ask'd why he call'd him saint, when he might see painted about him the arms of many towns he had usurp'd, and to which he had no right? the other answer'd him softly, In this country, we call saints all who are our benefactors.

As the worst of men, who would but promote or side with the temporal interest of the church, have never fail'd of her highest commendations; so the best have never escap'd her indignation and resentment, when they either oppos'd that interest, or found the least fault with the clergy, how justly or discreetly soever it was done. Of this there are as many proofs as there have been wise princes, that were no bigots to the clergy, or else

[a] Phil. de Comin. Memoir. *lib.* 7.

the

the reformation alone would convince us of it, when we reflect on the furious calumnies the church of *Rome*, promiſcuouſly attacking all ſects, has belch'd out againſt the proteſtants in general.

THIS policy the church made uſe of early: when emperors were once become chriſtians, the clergy receiv'd ſuch power and other worldly comfort from their authority, that they could not think of living without, and therefore loſt all patience when *Julian* was advanc'd to the empire. They did and ſaid againſt him every thing that rage and hatred could inſpire, and fix'd upon him the ſirname of apoſtate, to render him odious, which has ſtuck by him to this day. *Julian* had been differently educated, as well at *Pagan* as at chriſtian univerſities, and at one time he had heathens, and at another chriſtians for his tutors: but I never ſaw it prov'd, that he adher'd to chriſtianity at a time he might with ſafety have refus'd it. It muſt be confeſs'd, that as ſoon as he was maſter of his choice, he made the worſt, and unfortunately embrac'd paganiſm, becauſe it was the religion of his anceſtors.

BUT

BUT let him be call'd heathen or apoſtate, or what the clergy pleaſes, to judge of him impartially from hiſtory, we muſt own, that he was a virtuous and gallant prince, endu'd with wit and humanity, and more ſteadineſs and moderation than any of his chriſtian predeceſſors. In his letters he appears to have been a father to his people, and one of them I will take leave to inſert here, which will make us perfectly well acquainted with the tolerating temper of that prince, and at the ſame time point at the real cauſe of the clergy's animoſities againſt him.

JULIAN to the *Boſtrens.*

I *Should have* [a] *thought, indeed, that the* Galilean *leaders would have eſteem'd themſelves more indebted to me than to him, who preceded me in the adminiſtration of the empire: for in his time many of them ſuffer'd exile, perſecution, and impriſonment. Multitudes of thoſe, whom in their religion*

[a] Julian's *Epiſtles, Numb.* 52.

they

they term hereticks, *were put to the ſword; inſomuch, that in* Samoſata, Cyzicum, Paphlagonia, Bythinia, Galatia, *and many other countries, whole towns were levell'd with the earth. The juſt reverſe of this has been obſerv'd in my time. The exiles have been recall'd, and the proſcrib'd reſtor'd to the lawful poſſeſſions of their eſtates: but to that height of fury and diſtraction are this people arrived, that being no longer allow'd the privilege to tyrannize over one another, or perſecute either their own ſectaries, or the religious of the lawful church, they ſwell with rage, and leave no ſtone unturn'd, no opportunity unimploy'd, of raiſing tumult and ſedition. So little regard have they to true piety, ſo little obedience to our laws and conſtitutions, however human and tolerating. For ſtill do we determine, and ſteadily reſolve never to ſuffer one of them involuntarily to be drawn unto our altars.* ***. *As for the mere people indeed, they appear driven to theſe riots aud ſeditions by thoſe amongſt them whom they call* Clericks; *who are now inrag'd to find themſelves reſtrain'd in the uſe of their former power, and intemperate rule.* *** *They can no longer act the magiſtrate,*

ſtrate, or civil judge, nor aſſume authority to make people's wills, ſupplant relations, poſſeſs themſelves of other mens patrimonies, and, by ſpecious pretences, transfer all into their own poſſeſſion. For this reaſon, I have thought fit, by this publick edict, to forewarn the people of this ſort, that they raiſe no more commotions, nor gather in a riotous manner about their ſeditious clericks, in defiance of the magiſtrate, who has been inſulted, and in danger of being ſton'd by theſe incited rabbles. In their congregations they may notwithſtanding aſſemble as they pleaſe, and croud about their leaders, performing worſhip, receiving doctrine, and praying according as they are by them taught and conducted; but if with any tendency to ſedition, let them beware, how they hearken or give aſſent; and remember 'tis at their peril, if by theſe means they are ſecretly wrought up to mutiny and inſurrection. *** Live therefore in peace and quietneſs! neither ſpitefully oppoſing or injuriouſly treating one another. You miſguided people of the new way, beware on your ſide! And you of the ancient and eſtabliſh'd church, injure not your neighbours and fellow citizens, who

are

are enthuſiaſtically led away in ignorance and miſtake, rather than with deſign or malice! 'Tis by diſcourſe *and* reaſon, *not by* blows, inſults, *or* violence, *that men are to be inform'd of truth, and convinc'd of error. Again therefore, and again, I enjoin and charge the zealous followers of the true religion no way to injure, moleſt or affront the* Galilean *people.*

THESE were the ſentiments of this emperor, whom the clergy make ſuch a monſter, and whoſe very clemency they made a handle of for ſlander; complaining, that by his mildneſs and unlimited toleration he had done more prejudice to the church than others with perſecution. He was a politick prince, yet the clergy proved too hard for him, and never ceas'd plotting againſt him, till at laſt, to the great joy of the orthodox, he was aſſaſſinated by one of his chriſtian ſoldiers.

BUT if to this treachery we ſhould give the name of religious zeal againſt a *Pagan*, what excuſe can the church have for her violent hatred againſt her very pontiffs, whenever they have been men of pro-

probity, and endeavour'd to curb the licentiousness of the clergy? *Hadrian* the sixth was a prelate of vast learning and parts, of unquestionable morals, and exemplary frugality, and in short, one of the best popes that have fill'd the chair in these latter times. He was chose for his virtue, and the fame of his great abilities, [a] while he was absent, and wholly taken up with the government affairs of *Spain*. As soon as he began to act, he was lampoon'd and despis'd, and in a little time (it is thought) made away with. Since that, they have even reproach'd [b] him with stupidity, and want of taste, for the plainness of his dyet, and his aversion to luxury. Would you know the reason of this anger and inveteracy? He took notice [c] of the wicked lives of the clergy, and would reform them. See here part of the instructions this pope gave his nuncio to the dyet of the empire, which was held at the beginning of the reformation.

[a] Paul Jovius in vita Hadrian VI.
[b] Christoph. Battus.
[c] Moring. in vita Hadrian VI.

You ſhall tell them, (ſays he) *that we freely acknowledge, that* GOD *ſuffers this perſecution by the* Lutherans, *brought upon his church for the ſins of men, eſpecially the prieſts and prelates of the church. The ſcriptures declare, that the ſins of the people are derived from the ſins of the prieſt: for which reaſon, as St.* Chryſoſtom *tells us, our ſaviour, willing to take care of the infirmity of* Jeruſalem, *went into the temple to chaſtiſe the ſins of the prieſts firſt, as a good phyſician, who cures the diſtemper from the root. We know that in this our holy ſee for ſome years many abominations have been committed: abuſes in things ſpiritual, exceſſes in ordinances, and that every thing has been altered for the worſe; and it is no wonder if the diſeaſe from the head fell upon the members, from the popes to other inferiour prelates. All we prelates,* viz. *eccleſiaſticks, have declin'd every one to his own ways, and this great while there has not been any that has done well, not ſo much as one.*

A proteſtant writer imagines, that the cardinals ſo ſtrongly reſented this pope's reflecting upon the honour of the church, and his burning a man for the crime of

beaſtiality, that they [a] ſhortened his life.

How little, goodneſs it ſelf, and the eſſentials of chriſtianity are thought to be required in the head of the church, we may learn from thoſe who pretend beſt to underſtand her intereſt. *Innocent* XI. dreaded the exorbitant power and ambition of *Lewis* XIV. and oppoſed the proſperity of *France*, as much as any proteſtant prince, which made that nation very angry with him. Hear the ſally of one of them, who heard ſome body praiſe the piety and moral ſeverity of that pope in the year 1689. *The greatneſs and majeſty*, ſaid he, *of the catholick church, require a head not endowed with the virtues of a prieſt, but with the talents of a cunning politician. They require a head, who has the courage to damn himſelf for the good and encreaſe of his dominions; that is the way to perform the office of a good ſhepherd, who gives his life for his ſheep. A ſcrupulous and devout pope, like good* Adrian *the VIth, is only fit to let the temporals of the church periſh, which are ſo advantageous for the maintenance of the ſpirituals.*

[a] Nov. ex Epiſc. Belg. diviſio.

THIS

THIS *Frenchman* was partial, or elſe he would have found, *Innocent* had no piety that made him neglectful of his intereſt; he ſhould have conſider'd, that the court of *Rome* is no leſs concern'd than others in maintaining a ballance of power in chriſtendom. But had the pope aſſiſted the *Turk* againſt *Germany*, he would have commended him for acting againſt the *Roman* catholick religion to maintain the power of the *Roman* catholick church. *Sixtus* the Vth did the ſame againſt *Spain* in favour of *England* and *Holland*; and it is not improbable what *Leti* relates of him, [a] that he kept a ſecret correſpondence with queen *Elizabeth* to the prejudice of the king of *Spain*, notwithſtanding the bulls of excommunication he thunder'd out againſt her. His politicks were juſt; 'tis a leſs diſadvantage to the pope not to be acknowledg'd either in *Holland* or *England*, than if by ſuch an acknowledgment any catholick prince ſhould be enabled to obtain all his demands at *Rome*, either by fair or foul means.

[a] Leti Monarchie univerſelle, tom. 2.

THIS ought not to to be look'd upon as a digreſſion in a man, who is endeavouring to demonſtrate the difference between religion and the church. It ſhews, that whoever will be but mindful of the latter, ſhall have the clergy's leave to be as careleſs of the other as he pleaſes. The *Athenians* having been intent on nothing but religion for ſome time, were bid to take care not to mind heaven ſo much as to loſe the earth. I have often thought that this would be a needleſs caution to the clergy, who all make ſure of their power on earth firſt, whatever becomes of their intereſt in heaven. Every body does not know that good popes are ſuppos'd to be wicked of courſe, and that the church it ſelf has but a ſlender opinion of their ſalvation. Yet it is true, if you'll believe *Bellarmin*. *The Popes*, ſays he, *are ſo far from deſerving to be canonized, that they can hardly keep themſelves from hell.* If the authority of a cardinal be not ſufficient, I can back it with infallibility from the words of *Marcellus* the II. who one day cry'd out at table, [a] *I do not ſee, how thoſe,*

[a] Onuphrius in Marcello II. apud Ancillon.

that

that are ſeated in St. Peter's *chair, can be ſaved.*

AMONG the politicks of the church, pious frauds ought not to be forgot. I ſpeak not of the petty inventions of monks, and little prieſts to raiſe devotion for their own ends; but ſubſtantial calumnies rais'd by the fathers with the greateſt air of ſincerity. The *Pagans*, I have ſaid before, had a wretched theology; and no man could have wiſh'd for a more inconſiſtent ſyſtem to oppoſe, than their religion; yet the fathers were not contented without making it worſe, by falſe accuſations, than it was.

THE floral games were celebrated after a ſcandalous manner, with odious obſcenities: [a] this is undeniable; but it is not true what *Lactantius* ſays, that they were inſtituted by a curtezan, call'd *Flora*, who, grown rich by her trade, left the *Roman* people her heir, and order'd that the revenue of a certain fund, ſhe ſpecify'd, ſhould be employ'd to celebrate her birth-day; neither is it true, what he adds, that

[a] Lactant. Divin. Inſtit. *lib. cap.* 20.

the

the ſenate endeavour'd to hide from the publick the riſe of ſo infamous a cuſtom; that accordingly, taking advantage of the name of this curtezan, they pretended that *Flora* was the goddeſs of flowers? and, that in order to have a good harveſt, it was neceſſary to honour that goddeſs every year, and to make her propitious.

In the firſt place, the worſhip of *Flora* was inſtituted in *Rome*, [a] by *Tatius* and *Romulus* his collegue, and divine honours had been paid to this goddeſs by the *Sabins* before the building of *Rome*. In the ſecond, thoſe games were for a conſiderable time only celebrated as the intemperature of the ſeaſons requir'd it, or the books of the *Sybils* enjoyn'd it, and not every year, [b] before the year of *Rome*, 580, and then, the irregularity of the ſpring having prov'd very detrimental, a decree was made to have them exhibited yearly. From all which it is evident, that the ſuperſtition of the *Pagans* to the goddeſs of flowers, was no pretence but a reality.

[a] Varro *lib.* 4. de Lingua Lat.

[b] Voſſius de Orig. Idolol. *lib.* 1. *cap.* 12.

Laſtly

Laſtly the fund, [a] to defray the charges of the floral games, was the money accruing from the fines of thoſe, who had appropriated to themſelves ſuch lands as belong'd to the republick, and not any thing left by a common woman.

VOSSIUS and others have taken notice of this ſlander, and the firſt cautions us not to adopt for truth whatever the fathers have writ againſt the gentiles. A man may relate a falſhood by miſtake without any intention to deceive. This is pardonable, and poſſibly may be the caſe of *Lactantius*; but the fathers have done it often wilfully, and what is worſe, boaſted of it, when they had done; as if either force or deceit, or any thing had been fair againſt a heathen. St. *Jerom*, carried away by the violence of this prejudice, has not ſcrupled to tell us, [b] that the fathers were obliged to ſay not what they thought, but every thing requiſite to refute what the heathens believ'd. He endeavours to vin-

[a] Voſſius ubi ſupra.

[b] St. Hieron. Apolog. ad Pammachium pro libris adv. Jovinian.

dicate

dicate them by St. *Paul*'s example, but *Blondel* [a] has taken him up for it as he deſerved. No ſuch conduct can be prov'd upon any of the apoſtles, and truth needs not, nay ſcorns, the ſupport of falſhood.

It is a vulgar notion, that after the coming of Chriſt, or at leaſt upon the preaching of the goſpel, all the *Pagan* oracles immediately ceas'd; what father or prieſt was the author of it I know not. But it is manifeſt, that in the reign of *Conſtantius*, the ſon of *Conſtantine the great*, the oracle of the god *Beſa* ſubſiſted ſtill at *Abydus*, a city of *Ægypt*, famous upon many accounts. The evidence to prove this is remarkable. That emperor was [b] a ſuſpicious, credulous prince, of a mean genius, and being inform'd that divers people went to conſult this [c] oracle concerning his life, and the name of the perſon, who ſhould ſucceed him, he was in a great rage, and diſpatch'd away a commiſſion preſently to try the guilty, which caus'd great diſorders, and greater noiſe.

[a] Blondel de Sibylles *lib.* 1. *cap.* 26.
[b] Ammian. Marcell. ad ann. 359.
[c] Idem ibid.

That

THAT there were other oracles beſides, remaining long after the firſt planting of chriſtianity, we may learn from *Pauſanias*, [a] who affirms, that in his time there was no oracle ſo true as that of *Amphilochus*, which was at *Mallus* in *Cilicia*; from which it is to be ſuppoſed that there were ſeveral others. *Plutarch* likewiſe tells us, [b] that this oracle of *Amphilochus* was famous and flouriſhed in his days.

AS I have reaſon to fear more ſevere cenſures than others, ſo I muſt take precautions, which otherwiſe would be needleſs; when I ſpeak of oracles remaining after the coming of Chriſt, I have no deſign to aſſert the reality of them, I mean only, that they ſubſiſted, as they had done before, by the juggle and artifice of the prieſts who had the profit of them: and it is my real ſentiment, that they would not have ceas'd to this day, if people had not ceas'd to believe in them. I know it is the opinion of many, that the devil was at the bottom of all theſe oracles, and that

[a] Pauſan. *lib.* 1.

[b] Plutarch de ſera numinis vindict.

ſeveral imagine him to underſtand futurity, and often to foretel things truly, that are to come to paſs. But I confeſs, I do not think he was concern'd in them any further, than as he is charged in our indictments of felons; or that he can foretel things to come any more, than he can work miracles. None can work miracles but GOD, and thoſe to whom he immediately delegates his power; and I cannot believe that his power ever was employ'd in favour of idolatry, tho' a worthy divine of our church ſeems to inſinuate it.

WHAT I mean is this, *Brennus* [a] with an army of *Gauls* was in full march to ſack and pillage the rich temple of *Delphos*. But by the way ſuch a violent tempeſt aroſe of thunder and lightning, as conſum'd him and all his ſacrilegious hoſt. The heathens, as men of all other religions would have done, had the caſe been their own, cried out, a miracle! The chriſtians, not being able to deny the fact, laid it upon the old pack-horſe, the devil: but Dr. *Prideaux*, not willing to at-

[a] Juſtin. Hiſt. *lib.* 24.

tribute

tribute so great a power to the infernal fiend, is of opinion, that it really was a miracle, *and that* GOD *wrought it* [a] *for the sake of religion in general.*

HERE we differ: for tho' I am of the dean's opinion, that *Apollo*, *Jupiter*, or any other of the heathen gods, empty sounds, things without existence, could not raise this storm; yet the more I think on the great indignation, which the jealous GOD on all occasions expresses against idolatry, the less I can think, that he would have wrought a miracle to save this temple. I would rather say, that this tempest had been an accident, which all hot countries are subject to, than ascribe a conduct to GOD, which on several accounts is so unworthy the idea I have of him. These words, in the sense I understand them, suppose a reasoning of this kind. If *Brennus* robs and destroys this temple of *Delphos* with impunity, it may encourage others one day or other to attempt the same upon mine; and therefore I'll punish all sacrilege, that my own may be the more safe.

[a] *D.* Prideaux's *Connections of the Old and New Test.*

But if the words, *that* GOD *did it for the ſake of religion in general*, do not include this thought, I own that I do not underſtand their meaning; and heartily beg that learned man's pardon, if he takes offence at any thing I have ſaid; as to my ſelf I am ſure I deſign none, and am oblig'd to him for his elaborate works.

The *Mahometans* have not been uſed much better than the heathens. *Mahomet* was an impoſtor; his followers have aſſerted many falſities concerning him: But neither is all true that chriſtians have father'd upon them: nothing is more generally believed, than that to counterfeit a miracle, the body of *Mahomet* is ſuſpended in an iron coffin by virtue of loadſtones, artfully plac'd at *Mecca*: yet his body was buried at *Medina*, [a] where it remains to this day, without an iron coffin, and without any loadſtones; and the ableſt naturaliſts affirm [b], that ſuch a ſuſpenſion in the air by loadſtones ſurpaſſes all human skill.

[a] *Dr.* Prideaux *in the life of* Mahomet.

[b] *See* Bernier's *Abridgment of the Philoſophy of* Gaſſendus.

The

The ſtory likewiſe of the pigeon that uſed to come to this falſe prophet's ears has likewiſe been reported with great confidence, and ſome famous [a] writers aſſure us, that the *Muſſelmans* make mention of this dove; yet if we believe Dr. *Pocock* none [b] of the *Arabick* writers ſay any thing of it. Other things more ridiculous have been told us, concerning the credulity of the *Mahometans*, which they never heard of but from us.

THAT the ſpirit of inſincerity, which has haunted the church ſo many ages ago, has not been expell'd, or altogether laid, by the reformation, will be ſhewn in ſeveral places of the enſuing chapter: but that thoſe who have no mind to enter upon a freſh chapter, may not go away diſſatisfied, I ſhall give them an inſtance before we part. The proteſtants have long diverted themſelves with the ſtory of pope *Joan*, and ſeveral *Roman* catholics

[a] Gabriel Sionita & Johan. Heſronita in tractatu de nonnullis Orientalium Urbibus.

[b] *Dr.* Pocock Specim. Hiſtor. Arabum.

have, for want of better enquiry, been forc'd to yield them this point, till at laſt *Blondel*, a *French Hugonot*, made it evident [a] that it was a falſhood. *Spanheim* and *Mareſius* have in vain ſhew'd a great deal of erudition to re-eſtabliſh the credit of this fiction.

THIS I don't diſcommend them for, neither do I care whether there ever was a ſhe pope or not: but I think it inexcuſable, that thoſe who were themſelves convinc'd, that *Blondel* was in the right, ſhould be offended at the diſcovery. All the *Hugonots* [b] were very angry, that a miniſter of the reformed church ſhould prove the falſity of a thing which the proteſtant intereſt required to be true; they blamed him [c] for carrying away the filth of the papiſts, and ſaid, that thoſe who did not ceaſe to reproach the memory of the reformers deſerved not that any one ſhould do them that good of-

[a] In *Lib.* de Joanna Papiſta.
[b] In Præfat. Apologet. apud Mareſium.
[c] Curcellæus in reſutat. Sam. Mareſ.

fice.

fice. This was the language of the moſt moderate; others were hotter, and cried out, [a] that he had betray'd the proteſtant cauſe, and was brib'd by the enemies of it.

[a] Sarravius Epiſt. 178.

CHAP. VIII.

Of SCHISM.

THE church every where is look-ed upon as entire as a garment without ſeam; and whoever diſſents from what is believed in it, perſuading others to be of his opinion, tears and makes a rent in it, which is call'd ſchiſm. When men of foreſight and great abilities are by a deep laid policy raiſing a noble machine of power, it muſt be vexatious to ſee bunglers, either out of envy or ignorance, interrupt and diſturb them in their hearty endeavours: for this reaſon, the grand architects of the authority, and all the ſecular bleſſings of the church, were always ſo incens'd againſt thoſe who oppoſed them, and treated all innovators with ſo much ſeverity. It is undeniable, that great impieties and many monſtrous opini-

ons

ons have ſprung up among chriſtians, ſince the time of the apoſtles, and I am willing to believe, that moſt of thoſe who broached hereſies have had their by-ends that had no relation to religion; but then no hereſy began, but had a ſpecious pretence of advancing piety, or avoiding ſomething that gave offence in the ſyſtem of the orthodox.

THE charity of a chriſtian in conſtruing the actions of others, can hardly be too extenſive; and I believe that the body (for I have nothing to do with the heads) of moſt hereticks were better people than they have been repreſented to us. The terror men are under at the thoughts of holding an opinion that makes GOD the author of evil, has produced the *Marcionites*, *Manicheans*, *Pelagians*, *Arminians*, and many other ſects. The clear idea men have of the unity of GOD gave the firſt riſe to *Arianiſm*, and has ſo often reviv'd it under different ſhapes. When men of narrow views lye poring upon particular ſcripture places, and let go the main ſcope and drift of the goſpel, they muſt commit errors, or when men, having in vain raiſed

all

all their faculties to render the infinite sublimity of GOD and his attributes intelligible, and endeavouring to make him less incomprehensible, pull down, as it were, the Deity to the level of their weak intellects, they fall into miserable mistakes. This latter was the fault of *Origen*, who could not reconcile the eternity of damnation with the infinite goodness of GOD; and since him thousands have and daily do split on the like rocks.

THE searchers after truth are often labouring between a *Scylla* and a *Charybdis*; if they steer not steady, and are frighten'd too much from either side, they are infallibly lost. For fear of being scorch'd by the fire, men have leap'd into the sea, where nothing could save them.

WHAT strange turns of thought are human minds liable to! The *Abelians* were a sect of hereticks, that * would not suffer man to be alone, and ordered every one to take a woman for a help-meet; but strictly forbad all carnal commerce. They regulated marriage at the rate of the ter-

* *St.* Augustin. de Hæres. *c.* 87.

restrial

reſtrial paradice, where there was only the union of the heart between *Adam* and *Eve*. When a man and a woman were enter'd into that kind of ſociety, they adopted two children, a boy and a girl, who ſucceeded to their eſtate, and who were married together, under the ſame conditions of not getting children, but to adopt two of a different ſex: if theſe people were ſincere, they muſt have been far from laſcivious, and practis'd a world of ſelf-denial. We read of *Anchorets*, ſo affectedly modeſt, [a] that they would not behold their own nudities, nor touch their own obſcene parts but with a glove, and an ancient philoſopher [b] would never touch them either with or without gloves.

THE *Adamites* were a ſect of hereticks that likewiſe profeſs'd continency, but condemned marriage: when [c] they aſſembled for the exerciſe of their religion, they pull'd off their cloaths, and men and women ſat together ſtark naked, the miniſters as well

[a] Hiſt. Ludicra *of Balthazar's Bonifacius.*
[b] Zenocrates.
[c] Danæus in Auguſt. de Hæreſ. *cap.* 3.

as the laity. After they had perform'd their devotion, they put on their cloaths again and went home; if any committed a fault, he was no more receiv'd into that aſſembly: they ſaid, that having, like *Adam*, eat of the forbidden fruit, they were to be driven, like him, out of paradice, which was the name they gave to their church: St. *Epiphanius* alledges nothing againſt their chaſtity, but *Clemens Alexandrinus*[a] relates horrible things of them, and what might be fear'd from ſuch a cuſtom; but in thirty or forty years, a ſect may much deviate from the principles profeſs'd at their firſt inſtitution; having deriv'd their name from the ſtem of all human kind, theſe miſerable people imitated the nakedneſs which our firſt parents lived in, during the ſtate of innocence, and declin'd marrying, becauſe *Adam* did not know *Eve* till after his ſin, and after his going out of paradice; ſo that they believ'd, that if man had perſevered in his innocency, there would have been no marriage.

[a] Idem ibid.

MEN.

MEN may have extravagant notions, yet no criminal design, till human passion intervenes, and laying hold of the opportunity, turns that to wickedness and abomination, which was begun with the most innocent intention; witness the devotional watchings which were practis'd in the primitive church: as they were perform'd at night, and by great numbers, lascivious persons made an ill use of them; when it was found, that all the remedies applied to stop this evil, prov'd ineffectual, these publick watchings were entirely left off.

THE *Turlupins* were still a more infamous sect, in all respects as impudent [a] as the *Cynicks* among the heathens. Among the protestants there has been one *Picard*, [b] who over-stretch'd the errors of the *Adamites*, in respect to nakedness; in a little time he got a great many followers from *Flanders* into *Germany*, as far as *Bohemia*, tho' some *Roman* catholicks have given the

[a] Gerson apud Prateol.

[b] Varillas, *The History of Wickleſianism*, Part 2.

name

name of *Picards* [a] to all the protestants of *Bohemia* who oppos'd popery.

SEVERAL doating men likewise among the anabaptists [b] have affected to go naked, most of them more deserving pity than punishment. In the year 1535, *Adamites* have been seen at *Amsterdam* run stark naked through the streets, that were rich, and of good families; and it is reported, that some were fanatical enough to climb upon trees, where they waited in vain for bread to fall from heaven, until they fell half dead to the ground: many schisms ought only to have been ridicul'd, and the enthusiastical innovators treated, as most parts of *Europe* did the *French* prophets some few years ago; but the clergy-men have no patience, presently they are serious and fall to persecution; when men run into errors, because they are fools, it is wrong for wise men to be angry with and punish them, as if they were knaves.

THE schisms of note that have infested the church, from the time of the

[a] Rudigerus *in his History of the Brethren of* Bohemia.

[b] Lambertus Hortensius *in his Relation of the Tumults of the Anabaptists.*

apoſtles to that of *Luther*, are ſaid to have been [a] a hundred and fourſcore, whether more or leſs is not material to my purpoſe, the church of *Rome* has quell'd and triumph'd over them all, till that, which ſhe calls the northern hereſy, and we the reformation: by this ſhe receiv'd a ruder ſhock than ever ſhe ſuſtain'd before, and would have been deſtroy'd, had the reformers been unanimous; nay, if among the proteſtants the clergy could have but kept half the temper the princes endeavour'd to do, long before this time we would have known nothing of the pope or of the church of *Rome*, but from hiſtory.

As the reformation could not be brought about, without the help of the ſecular power, the laity was reſolv'd to be no loſers by it; in all countries where it took place, the publick immediately recover'd the greateſt part of the lands, the treaſure and other poſſeſſions of the church, that many different ways had been either coax'd or extorted from them by prieſtcraft: the ſupremacy in eccleſiaſtical, as

[a] Moreri.

well

well as temporal matters, which the pope claim'd as his undoubted right was injur'd, and in moſt places veſted in the civil magiſtrate, by which thoſe princes and ſtates became the real ſovereigns of their own dominions, without asking leave of the court of *Rome*; no infallibility of councils or of any viſible church was to be allowed of, and conſequently mens conſciences were deliver'd from the tyranny the prieſts had uſurp'd over them. And laſtly, matrimony was made as lawful to the clergy, as it was to the laity.

IT was on this foot only, that the clergy, as well as the ſovereigns of the reformers, thought it poſſible this great work could be accompliſh'd; and had churchmen no more deviated from theſe principles, than the princes have done, the temporal advantages that would have accrued from the reformation to every ſociety, without interfering with religion, would have been ineſtimable: nothing is more manifeſt than that, without taking away from the church its exorbitant power and authority, the reformation could never have been effected; for whoever acknowledges

ledge's the popes ſupremacy, can never by force of arms diſpute his juriſdiction, without owning himſelf to be in open rebellion; and it is impoſſible to act more inconſiſtently, than to ſay that popes are infallible, and at the ſame time contradict them, and ſhew that they have been guilty of many damnable errors.

YET as ſoon as an abſolute ſeparation from the church of *Rome* was made, the proteſtants had eſtabliſhed their communions, and the reformed religion was maintain'd by the ſovereigns in every country that had embrac'd it, the clergy preſently grew weary of being too apoſtolick; for as the firſt reformers had upon very good grounds found fault with, and given their ſentiments againſt the then eſtabliſhed church, ſo many of their ſucceſſors claim'd the ſame privilege, and openly told the world, that by the ſame authority, which was that of the ſcripture, it was as lawful for them to diſſent from the firſt reformers, if they could demonſtrate that they had been in an error, as it had been for the firſt reformers to diſſent from the church of *Rome*.

THIS not being eaſily anſwer'd by a proteſtant, without engaging himſelf in tedious diſputes, the national churches, in all reformed countries when ſchiſmaticks aroſe, wanted that power and authority to cruſh them, which in the church of *Rome* they had call'd an uſurpation; and no clergy-man, who has the temporal felicity of his order at heart, will ſcruple to own, that to keep up orthodoxy power is requiſite, as well as argument, and that no national church can flouriſh without it.

THE words infallibility and independency are odious, but if we examine into the behaviour of the clergy, we ſhall find but few proteſtant church-men, who would not be glad of ſome equivalents: moſt of them agree, that in all countries, the church ought to have a juriſdiction without appeal, that in all eccleſiaſtical matters, the clergy are the undoubted judges of the laity, as well as of their own order: but that church-men ſhould ever be tried by the laity, is not ſo well approved of, and many of them find fault with it, even for crimes againſt the ſtate; clergy-men, they ſay, ought at leaſt to be independent

on

on the government. In their prayers, and by way of compliment, a proteſtant clergy may ſtile their ſovereign to be under Chriſt the ſupreme head and governour of the church: but if this head complies not with all their demands however unreaſonable, if he refuſes to proſecute thoſe who diſſent from the national church, as violently as the clergy require he ſhould, he ſhall immediately be hated by them, ſlander'd, vilified, and, on all occaſions, treated with all the diſreſpect and ill language imaginable; how incens'd they will be, how furiouſly they'll fly in the face of their ſupreme governour, if at any time he pretends to direct or admoniſh them, tho' in the mildeſt manner; what clamours they will raiſe againſt him ſhould he but hinder them from coming together at ſynods and other aſſemblies, even when all the world knows that they deſire to meet from no other motive than human paſſion, and to gratify a vindictive ſpirit!

PROTESTANT church-men may likewiſe acknowledge, that it is not impoſſible they ſhould err, tho' I already

have given an instance of one who denied it, (*p.* 156.) but at the same time they require of us an implicit faith and ready assent, to every thing they shall advance. The national clergy in all countries hate arguing, they are always angry with those who oppose them, or but call the truth of their system in question; and no church ever had the power to punish men for disbelieving her doctrine, without making a severe use of it on the slightest occasions: from all which it is manifest, that if protestant church-men are so civil, as not to pretend to be infallible, they expect we should return the compliment, and treat them as if they were.

THE lawfulness of marriage in the clergy, which was agreed to at the reformation, they have not yet made any attempt against; they are easy on this head for their own sakes, for where incontinency is scandalous, and fornication punish'd, no clergy will live without wives; *Luther* allow'd two [a] to the landgrave of *Hesse*, and several passages in his works seem to favour poligamy; this I

[a] Varillas Histoir. de l'Heresie.

have

have nothing to do with: what I ſhall obſerve is, that the liberty of marrying in church-men, is an article of the higheſt importance to us; the rigorous precept of celibacy has all along been look'd upon by the vulgar of the *Romiſh* church as a piece of ſelf-denial, a mighty hardſhip which the clergy impoſed upon themſelves and underwent for the good of religion, whereas among all the machinations of the church, this was the deepeſt plot that has been laid againſt the wealth and property of lay-men.

THE reaſon alledg'd for it, that to keep the holy and immaculate office of the prieſt-hood at a Diſtance remote enough from uncleanneſs, this exquiſite purity was required, is a pretence as falſe as it is plauſible: Had chaſtity been the church's aim, ſhe would not have conniv'd at the lewd tranſgreſſions of the clergy as ſhe has done: In *Italy*, *Spain*, and *Portugal*, the indulgences for the ſin of the fleſh and all impurities, are cheap and eaſy; and at the ſame time that they look upon continence as a thing impracticable, marriage in a prieſt is ſhocking and abominable.

THIS

THIS may be folly in the multitude, but in the clergy it is craft; they know that if a ſociety of a hundred men, who have all vow'd celibacy, will keep up their number, and as any die, chuſe other ſingle men, under the ſame obligation in the room of the deceas'd, it muſt be immortal, and that if they have a certain income exceeding their yearly expences, tho' never ſo little, and there is the leaſt prudence and oeconomy among them, this ſociety, at long run, will get into their clutches the greateſt if not all the wealth of the country they live in. As the church had many artifices to ſcrape riches together, this was the moſt ſuitable contrivance to keep them.

BUT as this piece of policy was by all means to be conceal'd from the vulgar, it was thought neceſſary, to make ſome ſhew of virtue, and to produce ſome eminent examples of chaſtity among the clergy: for tho' the lewdneſs of prieſts and friars, at leaſt of the greateſt part of them, was notorious whilſt they were alive, it was no difficult matter, when they had been dead ſome time, and their memory was forgot by the publick, to ſay of them what they

pleas'd.

pleas'd. There is hardly an order of monks, that has not done themselves this kindness in the romantick praises they have bestow'd upon their founders. St. *Ignatius de Loyala* was a soldier by profession, and had given proofs [a] of his valour, when suddenly he became a zealous votary to the virgin *Mary*, hung up, and all night watch'd his arms in a chappel consecrated to her, where with all the ceremonies, used in ancient [b] chivalry, he declared himself her champion, and dedicated the remainder of his life to her service. The holy virgin in return, if we believe his historians, bestow'd on him the gift of continence in such a [c] degree, that, from the time he became her knight to his death, he felt not the least symptom of an immodest Temptation.

A critick will say, that his panegyrists have over-shot the mark, that by endea-

[a] Ribadeneiro in vita Ignatii *lib.* 1. *cap.* 4.

[b] *He was converted by reading the Legends of the Saints, as* Don Quixot *was to Knight-Errantry, by reading of old Romances.* Stillingfleet, *of the Fanaticism of the Church of* Rome.

[c] Ribadeneir.

vouring

vouring to render his virtue too ſublime, they left him none, that where there is no deſire there can be no ſelf denial, and that a man, who is not ſenſible of any temptation, can claim no greater merit from continence, than he can from frigidity. This fault is not to be found with the commendations beſtow'd on St. *Francis* of *Aſſiſi*, the founder of one of the four mendicant orders, whoſe chaſtity has been highly extoll'd, tho' the conflicts he had with carnal temptations were very ſevere. *At the beginning of his Converſion* [a] (ſays St. *Bonaventure*) *he would often throw himſelf in a ditch full of ice, that he might get a compleat victory over his domeſtick enemy, and to preſerve the robe of chaſtity from the conflagration of pleaſure. Being one day ſtrongly preſs'd by a temptation of the fleſh, he pull'd off his cloaths* [b] *and ſcourg'd himſelf ſoundly! After that he open'd his cell and went into a garden, where he threw himſelf into a great heap of ſnow.* The

[a] *See* Ferrand's *anſwer to the apology for the reformation.*

[b] Ibidem.

fever

fever of lust must be very high, where such violent coolers are requir'd.

We have had a monk of our own long before St. *Francis*, who made use of the same potent remedies, and often flung himself [a] into cold water or snow, to extinguish the flames of concupiscence; but with greater success as to triumph. For St. *Francis*, in the heighth of his eager desires [b] durst not come near women; St. *Aldhelme*, an *English* friar, who lived in the eighth century, and was for his learning and piety made a bishop, got so perfect a mastery over the flesh, that [c] the finest woman made no impression upon him: and not to flinch from the most dangerous temptations, he went to bed to a young girl, and lying by her side repeated the whole psalter, whilst the motions of his heart tended only to heaven.

This invincible fortitude of St. *Aldhelme*, has been look'd upon as an example [d] ra-

[a] Wilhelm. Malmesbury, in vita St. Aldhelmi.

[b] St. Bonaventura in vita St. Francisc.

[c] Malmesbury ubi supra.

[d] *History of the works of the learned for the month of* April, 1689.

ther to be admired than imitated; and I believe not, that many, who have hazarded themſelves to ſuch trials of virtue, are come off conquerors, tho' ſeveral experiments have been made of it ſince the time of this ſaint. About the year 1437. the counteſs of *Guaſtala* by the advice of *Baptiſt de Crema*, a jacobin monk, founded a ſociety call'd, *That of the victory over ones ſelf againſt the fleſh.* To gain this victory, a certain lady named *Julia*, put a young fellow into bed with a young girl, and laid a crucifix as a barrier betwixt them; which, if it kept them virtuous, ought not to be omitted in the catalogue of the miracles that have been wrought by crucifixes. This ſociety of *Guaſtalians* multiply'd prodigiouſly for ſome time, till being look'd upon as libertines, they were every where expell'd.

WHAT fine ſtories or legends ſoever we are told of later ſaints, it is certain, that all the ancient fathers, and others who have wrote with any ſincerity, found no-

[a] Hiſt. de la Mappe-Monde Papiſtique *Page* 18. *Edit.* 1567.

thing

thing more difficult to conquer than the sin of the flesh. St. *Jerom* tells [a] us, that the touch of a woman ought to be avoided like that of a mad dog, a caution as terrible as could be given by any man, how severely soever he had been bit by them. Yet the experience of St. *Jerom* in that affair, was not comparable to that of St. *Augustin*, who owns to us, that in his youth he was excessively addicted to women, and made use of a prayer, in which he desired GOD [b] to make him chast, but not too soon.

IT is true, that this father repented of all these things; but he forsook not his lewdness at once: the first symptoms of amendment that he shew'd, was [c] to fix his incontinency, which had before been rambling on many objects; he took a concubine with whom he was contented several years, and having resolv'd on matrimony sent her back into *Africk*, whence he had her. But he had contracted such a

[a] Heronym. *lib.* 1. contra Jovinian.
[b] Augustin. Confess.
[c] Idem ibid.

habit of incontinency, even when he had renounced Manicheiſm, and prepar'd for his baptiſm, that he was forc'd to take [a] a new concubine in the room of her he had diſmiſs'd, till the maiden deſign'd for his wife ſhould come of age to be married, for which he was to tarry near two years. No man has ſpoke with greater freedom concerning the force of concupiſcence, and the extaſies of luſtful pleaſures than himſelf, converted as he was; and this father has more than once expreſs'd himſelf ſo lively on this head, that he is better let alone than read in thoſe places by moſt people.

I have ſaid thus much of the injudicious encomiums of the legendaries in relation to the chaſtity of ſome ſaints, and hinted at the dangers, which virtue runs in a forc'd celibacy, to make it viſible, by what means the craft of *Rome* has weather'd all the ſtorms, that have attack'd her before the reformation; and deſire every one to conſider, whether a proteſtant ought ever to wiſh for the return of the wealth, the

[a] Idem.

autho-

authority, and the power the church had before ſhe was reform'd, if theſe were the noxious weeds ſhe was to be clear'd from? But if they are thought neceſſary and men will look upon them as the ſtrong banks, that have ſtem'd the moſt raging tides of hereſy; thoſe who have overthrown them, ought not to wonder at the inundation of ſchiſms, which has follow'd upon the deſtruction of them?

LUTHER was the firſt reformer, and had made a conſiderable progreſs before *Calvin* appear'd in that work: the church of *England* was the laſt, and before our reformation was in any forwardneſs, ſeveral ſchiſms were already ſprung from Lutheraniſm; tho' in the firſt fifty years they had not above twelve, of which that of the anabaptiſts was one of the firſt. Afterwards they very much encreas'd in number: different ſchiſms likewiſe aroſe from Calviniſm, and the anabaptiſts have been divided in a vaſt many ſects, [a] ſome of them extreamly different from the others. In the beginning alſo of the reformation

[a] John Henry Ottius *Annals of Anabaptiſm.*

Arianiſm was reviv'd, and many of that ſect, imbued with other pernicious errors, came from *Italy* to *France*, *Germany* and *Holland*, but finding no refuge any where elſe, ſettled in *Poland*.

If we conſider the principal ſects of the proteſtants, with all their diviſions and ſubdiviſions, we ſhall find their number to be frightful; and if we reflect on all the manifold miſchiefs of civil wars, maſſacre and ruin, they have been the occaſion of, we ſhall have reaſon to ſay, that nothing under the ſun is more deſtructive to mankind than ſchiſm. Many wiſe princes, and able ſtateſmen have endeavour'd to remedy this evil, by uniting proteſtants together, but have always been hinder'd by the clergy, either of one ſide or other: and, if any church-men (for it is not to be done without them) ever engaged in ſo good a deſign, they have been conſtantly reproach'd, and call'd traytors, and falſe brethren for it, by the reſt of their order.

FER-

[a] *FERRI,* [b] *Dureus,* [c] *Hottinger,* and ſeveral other moderate divines of the laſt century, who lamenting the diviſions of the proteſtants, labour'd for an union among them, have all met with this fate; and long before them the ſame treatment was given to *James Acontius,* who receiv'd ſo many favours of queen *Elizabeth,* and was the author of the famous book call'd *The ſtratagems of the devil.* Some ſaid of him, that he had a mind to reduce all ſects into one, and [d] incloſe them in the ſame ark, as *Noah* did all ſorts of animals in his, wherein they were preſerv'd, tho' ſuſtain'd by different food: others accuſed him, that by reducing the points neceſſary to ſalvation to a ſmall number, and

[a] Paul Ferri *a learned Divine, and a famous Preacher at* Metz.

[b] John Dureus, *a* Scotch *Divine, who travell'd through* Germany, *to negotiate an Accommmodation between the* Lutherans *and* Calviniſts. *See his* Prodromus tractat. irenicor.

[c] John Henry Hottinger, *a* Swiſs *Divine, who was made Preſident of the Commiſſioners, who were to reviſe the* German *Tranſlation of the Bible.* Heidelb. in vita Hotting.

[d] Iſaac Junius in examin. Apolog. Remonſtrant.

requiring a [a] toleration for the particular opinions, which were againſt the other articles, he open'd a wide door to all manner of hereſies.

THE differences between *Luther* and *Calvin*, have above all the reſt been very fatal to their followers, becauſe the numbers are ſo formidable of each ſide. The valiant king of *Sweden*, *Guſtavus Adolphus*, labour'd hard in his time, to reunite them, but in vain; *and it is certain, that a re-union between them had been made long ago, had it depended only upon the princes; but becauſe that affair depends on divines, it never yet could take effect, and probably never will.* It is not a layman, who judges thus of theſe gentlemen, generally ſpeaking, but it is one of their own order, and he amongſt others, that can ſpeak beſt of it by experience.

HE [b] ſays, *that the buſineſs of the reunion ought to be principally committed to ſecular perſons, and not to eccleſiaſticks. The divines*, adds he, *are too much addicted to*

[a] Peltius in dedicatione Harmoniæ.

[b] Petrus Jurius de pace ineunda.

their

their own ſenſe, and have but little equity for thoſe that differ from their opinion. They ſhould not diſpute concerning the truth of the doctrines; for diſputes rather create new wars than appeaſe the old ones; the diſputants are not for concord, but for victory. They, who find themſelves worſted, grow more haughty and enraged. In an aſſembly, where a re-union is treated of, the divines ſhould be reduced to the plain function of advocates. They ſhould be heard, but not be judges: That quality ought to be left to ſtateſmen, and it is neceſſary, that the divines ſhould even take an oath, that they will ſubmit to the ſentence that the political judges ſhall pronounce.

SINCE then without tyranny and granting a power to the church, which is deſtructive to the ſtate, it is impoſſible to make men agree in ſentiments of things, about which from their cradle they have been taught to differ, and notions once embraced cannot be dropt, whilſt there are clergy-men to uphold them; the wiſeſt meaſures a nation can take for its tranquillity are, chiefly to endeavour two things; one of them is, to prevent, as much as poſ-

poſſible, all further ſchiſm, every one in his own ſect. The other, to watch narrowly and diſappoint thoſe, who would make a handle of their differences to do miſchief. To do the firſt, nothing is more effectual than to make all confeſſions, and articles of faith, as comprehenſive, and conceive them in as general terms, as the word of GOD will allow of. For when the rigoriſts of any ſect begin to be too particular in explaining ſome ſcripture places, and never reſt till they have ſo narrowly contracted the ſenſe of them, that it is impoſſible to conſtrue them any other way, than what ſhall ſuit with their private fancy; tho' at the ſame time the words, in which the holy writers have deliver'd them, may admit of various expoſitions; it is then that ſchiſm and miſchief are a hatching; for whoever cannot concur with every word, the majority have agreed to ſtate their explication in, is excommunicated and declared a ſchiſmatick.

BUT as the following of the firſt maxim chiefly concerns the clergy, the laity, who beſides their wiſhes for the obſervance of it,

it, can contribute but little to it, ought to lay the greateſt ſtreſs upon the ſecond, which is to diſappoint thoſe who would make a handle of their differences to do miſchief; and this is altogether in their power in every proteſtant country, if the better ſort and ſenſible part of them will but ſteadily reſolve, in the firſt place, never to believe, what different ſects ſay of one another, if what is alledged be not plainly prov'd on the party accus'd; ſecondly, to prefer the diſcourſes of JESUS CHRIST to any modern ſermons, they can hear, and the charms of the peaceful goſpel to the diſtorted countenance of an angry prieſt; to ſpend time in exhorting men to the latter is an affront to chriſtians; but to ſhew the reaſonableneſs of the firſt, and the ſolid grounds there are for ſuch a reſolution, I muſt beg leave to draw a little ſketch of the clergy's behaviour to each other, when they claſh in opinion, and neither conferences, nor the interpoſition of the government, can accommodate the matter.

THE firſt onſet of the war is commonly made by caſes rightly ſtated, and vindi-

cations

cations on both ſides; letters to a friend, anſwers and replies, and, where the preſs is open, pamphlets fly about like hand grenadoes in an attack. The firſt generally contain proofs, arguments and appeals to common ſenſe; in the next you'll have cavils, and logical diſtinctions; till at laſt they end in calumnies and invectives.

THE firſt weapon in their artillery of ſlander, is the accuſation of atheiſm, blaſphemy, or a tendency to one of them; which is made uſe of by all parties, and as occaſion ſerves flung on tenets diametrically oppoſite. The doctrine of predeſtination has been beſpatter'd with it a thouſand times. *Martin Becanus* is more extravagant, who ſays, that the fruits of *Calviniſm*, are more pernicious than thoſe of atheiſm. *Arminianiſm* aſſerts free-will, and is in that point the reverſe of *Calviniſm*; yet *Vedelius*, a famous reformed divine, ſays, that the ſcope of it is to introduce a ſubtle atheiſm into the church.

AS there is nothing more generally abominated, or more juſtly deteſted than the

the name of atheiſt, ſo it is often abuſed, and ſerves evil men for an inſtrument of ſlander, to defeat an enemy without any further trouble: no other calumny is counted ſo effectual to blow up a man at once, whether he deſerves it or not; and as in this it is like gun-powder, ſo it is the ſame in its origin, which both owe to the clergy. Accordingly they have always claim'd that word of reproach as their property, and the divines of different ſects and religions have conſtantly made uſe of it, either againſt the laity, whom they diſliked, and would render the object of the publick indignation and fury; or elſe among themſelves in theological warfare, and the zealous exerciſe of their ſuperlative and proverbial hatreds of one another.

THE next ſtratagem of the clergy is to faſten, if poſſible, ſome crime againſt the ſtate on the tenets of their adverſaries, that by the one they may render them as odious to men, as by the other they have repreſented them to be to GOD. So one doctrine is ſaid to favour tyranny and arbitrary power, another to be antimonarchical,

narchical, and leading to anarchy. During the greateſt part of the two laſt centuries, the national clergy of *France* exclaim'd with great violence againſt the Hugonots, and loudly aſſerted, that they were all republicans, and the greateſt enemies to the crown, whilſt themſelves appear'd in arms againſt their princes more than once, and were not only the open abetters in aſſaſſinating two of their kings ſucceſſively, but [a] many of them likewiſe have pretended, by their own tenets, to juſtify theſe execrable murders.

THE other arms, which they diſplay in calumniating one another, conſiſt in perſonal reflections, falſe quotations, and downright lyes. It is impoſſible for men, unacquainted with religious controverſies, to imagine what improbable falſhoods the ſons of *Rome* have dar'd to publiſh againſt the firſt reformers: their rage againſt *Luther* has been altogether ſenſeleſs, and come up to frenzy. I would not ſpeak thus of common detraction, but ſome have been

[a] *See* Thuanus Hiſtor. & Maimbourg. Hiſtor. de la Ligne, Liv. 3.

fooliſh

foolish enough, seriously to assert, that an *Incubus* [a] begot him upon his mother. The very astrologers have thrown in their mite, and falsify'd the hour of his [b] nativity, to have an opportunity of drawing his horoscope to their mind.

THE *Lutherans* have been almost as violent again *Calvin*, who undertook to reform them; and a minister of theirs, one *Hunnius* [c], who was otherwise a man of learning, had his understanding so blinded by his zeal, as to accuse him at once of *Nestorism*, *Judaism*, *Mahometism*, and, to shew himself compleatly mad, [d] atheism; for a man in his senses would have known that the imputation of the last could not be true, if but any one of the other was.

THE *Calvinists* again have father'd many things upon the *Anabaptists* and other sects which they never dream'd of; and

[a] *See* Maimbourg. Histor. du Lutheran. & Spondan. annal ad ann. 1517.

[b] Seckendorf Hist. Lutheran. *lib.* 1.

[c] Giles Hunnius *a famous* Lutheran *Divine, Professor of Divinity at* Marpurg.

[d] *In a Book call'd* Calvinus Judaizans.

all

all of them in their differences and paper wars, dealt very unfairly with one another. But that I may not be thought to aggravate these matters, I shall quote the testimony of *Jerom Zanchius*, a protestant divine, who once was like to have fill'd a professor's chair in *England*, where he complains of the manner of writing used among the protestants, even those who would be counted pastors, doctors, and pillars of the church. *We often*, (says he) *that the state of the question may not be understood, wrap it up in obscurity. Things that are manifest we impudently deny; such as are false we affirm without shame: things openly impious, we obtrude as the first principles of faith; what's orthodox we condemn for heresy. We wrest the scriptures, according to our own dreams, as we list. We brag of the fathers, when there is nothing which we have less a mind to, than to follow their doctrine. To sophisticate, to throw calumnies, and call names, is familiar to us. So we can but maintain our own cause,*

good

good or bad, justly or injuriously, we care not what becomes of the rest [a].

SHOULD any one object, that this *Zanchius*, though he was a protestant, had been much abused by his brethren, and when he wrote this, had been led away by human passion and resentment; I shall only answer, that then he may serve me in a double capacity, and so make use of him for an example and a witness both; and being one of the most celebrated divines of the sixteenth century, if he be thought not so well qualify'd for the one, he must be more eminently so for the other.

BY this time, I hope, I have convinc'd my reader, that we ought not to believe what different sects say against one another without proof. I confess I need not have gone so far beyond sea for one single testimony of an author, who has wrote near an hundred and fifty years ago, when, to corroborate my assertion, I might have so many thousand living witnesses at home,

[a] *A Translation from the Latin quoted by Father* l'Abbe, in dissert. de Script. Eccleſiast. *tom.* 2.

But I did it in behalf of those peevish gentlemen, that are always finding fault with the times, to convince them, that the protestants of our age are not worse than they were at the beginning of the reformation, and that clergy-men are now as they have been all along.

THE benefit a nation will receive from the maxim I recommend, is plainly visible; for when each party ceases to believe the evil, which is said of the other, the anger of both must soon be disarm'd, and consequently the firebrands, who by their stories and suggestions design to do mischief to either, or both, disappointed. It is for want of this resolution only that schism can be pernicious to the state: but if we believe, without examination, what we are told of our adversaries, there can be no peace, and our animosities must be eternal, tho' in the main we quarrell'd about nothing.

OUR church and the presbyterians disagree about ceremonies, and way of worship, but the religion of both is the same; for allowing the doctrine of a church and the government of a church to be

two

two things, one may be for, and another againſt epiſcopacy, without differing in religion, more than one divine of the church of *England* may differ from another, of the ſame church, which happens daily without giving offence; and I don't believe there are two chriſtians in the world, that have exactly the ſame ſentiments about every thing contain'd in the bible. Yet what a heinous ſchiſm is their religion! And what a monſtrous ſuperſtition is ours!

WOULD you know what presbyterians are? go to ſome churches and you may hear, that they are a wilful, ſeditious and perverſe people, a generation of vipers, the worſt of ſubjects; that all their pretences to religion are only hypocriſy; that they are of antimonarchical and king-killing principles; that they have been the occaſion of all the calamities that have befallen the land for above theſe hundred years.

BUT if they are repreſented to us in this manner, their miniſters have not been behind hand with ours, and ſome of them have drawn us to their congregations in no better colours. They ſay of us, that we are always talking of the church, and

none louder than those who never go into it; that our worship is half popery; that we never think a king the head of the church but when he is a slave to the clergy; that our church never flourishes, but when the state is in danger, and we never complain but in just reigns; that we laugh at passive-obedience, when it is not our turn to govern, and never preach up that doctrine heartily, but to impose it upon others; that unless our party is pleas'd, we stick at no mischief, and then lay the fault on our adversaries.

WHILST by such stories the dissenters are frighten'd from our church and communion, and our selves continue in the sentiments we are taught to harbour of them, it is not likely our breaches should ever be lessen'd. Is not the nation in general very much obliged to the clergy of both sides? One thing indeed may be said in behalf of the dissenting clergy, that cannot be alledg'd as an excuse for the national. Their ministers speak ill of us for their daily bread, and many of them would have their livelihood to seek, were our differences made up: It is not their interest

we

we should meet each other half way, more than it would be the interest of a ferryman to have the two shores unite. Whereas the national clergy can have no such fears; their income is settled, and they might live as comfortably without calumniating their neighbours, as now they do with it.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

Of TOLERATION *and* PERSECUTION.

SCHISM is an ailment in the body politick, not to be extirpated but by an utter amputation of the limbs infected, and a ſteady cruelty, zealouſly purſued without pity or remorſe. All petty ſeverities, however wholeſome they may appear, are quack medicines, which only put the patients to pain, without removing the diſtemper. It is a caſe in which no remedies are effectual but killing ones; and to perſecute by halfs, is ſprinkling water upon a coal-fire; a ſmall quantity of it will encreaſe the flame, which a pail full would have totally extinguiſh'd.

IN

In the latter part of the foregoing chapter, I have named a method how ſchiſm may remain, and yet the evils generally apprehended from it, by the prudence of the laity be prevented. If we conſider how eaſily it may be bore with, without any detriment to the publick tranquillity, and we compare the peaceful maxim laid down there to the height of barbarity, by which only ſchiſm can be cured, perſecution muſt appear to us as a remedy abundantly worſe than the diſeaſe; and the more a man knows of the world, either from reading or experience, the more he ſhall be convinc'd, that not only reveal'd as well as natural religion, but likewiſe humanity, reaſon, the intereſt of mankind, their peace and felicity, and almoſt every thing in nature pleads for toleration, except the national clergy in every country.

Those who are the moſt ſollicitous about the temporal intereſt of the church, are commonly the greateſt perſecutors. It is the opinion of *Leo Allatius*, the greateſt champion of the papal authority, whom [a] I

[a] Page 137.

have

have quoted once before, *That hereticks must be proscrib'd, exterminated and punish'd, and if they are obstinate, burnt and put to death* [a]. Neither is this only a lesson of the inquisition, no where taught but in *Italy*, *Spain*, and *Portugal*; the *Gallican* church, who treats popes with greater freedom, has preach'd up the same doctrine with no less violence against the *Hugonots*. Let us see what *Quintin*, a famous professor of the canon-law at *Paris*, said in a speech he made in the name of the clergy, during the assembly of the states at *Orleans*, in *December*, 1560, the king and queen being present.

HAVING demanded, [b] *That all the inhabitants of the kingdom should be obliged to be catholicks; that the non-christians, that is, the hereticks, should not be admitted into the conversation and company of the christian subjects, and that for the time to come all hereticks should be forbidden to deal in any commodity, (whether it were books or any other thing)*, he added these dreadful words:

[a] Leo Allatius de perpetua consensione, *lib.* 2. *c.* 13.

[b] Presid. la place de l'estat de la religion & republique Liv. 4.

And therefore our requeſt is juſt, reaſonable, holy and catholick, and grounded upon the expreſs command of GOD, *who enjoyns you, Sir, to grant it us, repeating the ſame command in ſeveral places, and at ſeveral times. He ſpeaks of the idolators and* Gentiles *ſtrangers to the law; hereticks among chriſtians are accounted to be ſuch: theſe are the words of the ſaid law of* GOD; *be ſure not to contract any friendſhip, confederacy or marriage with them; don't ſuffer them to inhabit the country; take no pity on them, beat them, ſtrike them to death.* Here follows the reaſon of that command, *leſt they ſhould make thee ſin againſt me; if thou believeſt their opinions, which will be an offence and a ſcandal that will raiſe my fury againſt thee, and ſoon after I ſhall deſtroy thee. Sir, and you Madam, avoid thoſe horrible and dreadful threatnings, for the ſalvation of your ſouls, and the preſervation of your ſcepter. This is, Sir, what your clergy of* France *propoſe and repreſent to your majeſty in all ſimplicity, obedience, humility and ſubmiſſion concerning the honour and ſervice of* GOD *in your kingdom, and for the extirpation*

tirpation and abolition of what is contrary to it, viz. *of ſects and heretics.*

IT is plain, that the moſt humble and devout of the clergy, by this memorial, to which he ſaid they expected an anſwer, were for ſhedding blood as a thing neceſſary, ſince they minded the king of *Moſes*'s order and threatnings: and before what I have quoted, *Quintin* had already ſaid, *That his majeſty being ſtrong, and arm'd with iron, ought to oppoſe the hereticks; that in order to it, and for no other end,* GOD *had put the ſword into his hands, to protect the good, and puniſh the wicked; and that none can deny, that a heretick is capitally wicked, and conſequently ought to be puniſh'd capitally; being liable to the ſword of the magiſtrate.*

THUS freely church-men expreſs themſelves, before the ſecular power is wrought up to miſchief; but when princes become tyrants, and ſet about perſecution in earneſt themſelves, the clergy deſire to be ſeen in it no longer. It is not forty years ago, that the *Gallican* church in a ſpeech to *Lewis* XIV. made ſome months before the revocation of the edict of *Nantes*, declared, *That ſhe did not deſire his majeſty ſhould*

ſhould make uſe of his power for the extirpation of hereticks. The *Hugonots* complain'd of this diſſimulation, as may be ſeen in the words of Mr. *Claude.*

WHILST *the thing,* ſays he, [a] *was only preparing, the authors of the perſecution did not conceal themſelves, but uſed their endeavours to make the king appear in it. When things came to the laſt extremity, and to open force, they conceal'd themſelves as much as they could, and made the king appear in his whole extent. There was nothing to be heard then but this ſort of diſcourſes. The king will have it ſo. The king is reſolv'd upon it. The king goes farther than the clergy deſire. By theſe two means they have been ſo cunning as to aſcribe to themſelves the leaſt violent part of that perſecution, and to charge the king with the moſt odious part.*

THESE things may paſs in a *Roman* catholick clergy. A church that claims infallibility and ſuperiority over all titles and governments, and is in actual poſſeſſion of wealth and a property, ſufficient to make

[a] Claude plaintes de proteſtants.

the laity dread her, may have ſome plea for perſecution: but a proteſtant church, that has not only own'd that ſhe can err, and that the magiſtrate is above her, but likewiſe ſuffer'd her ſelf to be ſtript of her treaſure, one would think could have no pretenſions to juſtify, nor means to go through with it. Yet there is no national church among the proteſtants, that has not try'd to perſecute as far as the ſecular power would let her; and a ſingle presbyter, who has once been ſuffer'd to make himſelf popular, and the idol of the mob, may render himſelf as formidable to the ſtate as a pope.

AT *Geneva* by the ſole authority of *Calvin* many have been proſcrib'd, and beſides *Servetus*, who every body knows was burnt for hereſy, [a] *Alciatus*, [b] *Blandrata* [c] *Gribaldus*, and ſome others, would have met with the ſame fate, if they had not ſaved themſelves by flight, and even after

[a] John Paul Alciatus, *a Gentleman of* Milan.

[b] George Blandrata, *an* Italian *Phyſician, born in* Piedmont.

[c] Mathew Gribaldus, *a learned civilian of* Padua.

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the life of that great reformer, [a] *John Valentinus Gentilis*, who, like the reſt, was fled, and got into *Moravia*, ventur'd, upon the death of his moſt dreadful adverſary, to return into *Switzerland*, but was laid hold of, proſecuted by the Calviniſts, and had his head [b] ſtruck off for oppugning the myſtery of the Trinity in the territories of *Bern*; glorying that he ſuffer'd for the honour of GOD the father.

[c] *CASTALIO*, who likewiſe had been forc'd to quit *Geneva* on the ſcore of heterodoxy, publiſhed a book a little after the execution of *Servetus*, in which he blam'd that action, and ſpoke up for toleration, [d] diſguiſing himſelf under the name of *Martinus Bellius*. This *Beza* wrote againſt, maintaining, that [e] hereticks were to be puniſh'd by the magiſtrate. So that whether we judge from the example

[a] *He was a native of* Coſenza *in the kingdom of* Naples.

[b] Aretius. Hiſt. Reform. Polon.

[c] *A learned* Savoyard, *who was many years profeſſor of the* Greek *tongue at* Bazil, *where he dy'd.*

[d] Ant. Fayus. in vita Bezæ.

[e] Beza de puniend. Hæret.

of *Calvin*, or the precepts of *Beza* his collegue, and greateſt champion, perſecution ſeems to be a manifeſt tenet of Calviniſm. Whatever piety, eloquence and erudition theſe mighty pillars of the reformed church might be endued with, they were not always govern'd by the ſpirit of chriſtianity; their zeal was often ſuperior to their charity, they were implacable to all adverſaries, and in the moſt important of their actions, they were over-rul'd by human paſſion.

SHOULD it be objected, that ſuch tempers as theirs were more prone to anger and perſecution than others; that among the Calviniſts there were meak and compaſſionate chriſtians, and that therefore the charge ought not to be ſo general as I have laid it, I would anſwer; that power and authority were dangerous tools in the hands of churchmen: that whenever they were warmly oppoſed they could never forbear making uſe of them, and that how juſt, humane and compaſſionate ſoever their natural temper might be, all clergy-men in power turn'd perſecutors, as ſoon as they were thoroughly anger'd. St. *Auguſtin* had

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an incomparable wit, and an imagination happy and abounding. [a] He had all along entertain'd ſentiments of mildneſs and charity concerning the courſe to be taken with hereticks: but the conteſtations he had with the Donatiſts, heated him ſo much, that he ran into the quite contrary opinion, and maintain'd ſtoutly, that hereticks ought to be perſecuted.

THE grand reaſon chiefly alledged for perſecuting hereticks is, that GOD is offended at them, and will puniſh a whole nation for ſuffering them to live among them. The proofs to juſtify theſe apprehenſions are always fetch'd from the Old Teſtament, for a very good reaſon, becauſe there are none in the New: but how fantaſtical and perverſe are mens judgments concerning an affair which ſeems to require the utmoſt impartiality!

IN ſome proteſtant countries men ſhall be baniſh'd, and have their goods confiſcated, or elſe be impriſon'd and more ſeverely puniſhed, becauſe they refuſe to believe

[a] *Mr.* Claude, *in a Letter written at* Switzerland, *printed at* Dort *in* 1790.

every comment ſome divines have made on the goſpel, and will not acquieſce in all the creeds drawn from it by human invention, though they believe in CHRIST and his apoſtles, and are perſwaded, the New Teſtament, and every thing contain'd in it, to be the word of GOD, whilſt the ſame nation ſuffers others to build ſtately ſynagogues where they liſt, who do not only reject, but likewiſe deſpiſe and ſcoff at the goſpel and chriſtianity, as much as the heathens, and allows a worſhip as publick and as undiſturb'd as the church injoys to men, whoſe religion could have no being in our days, if they did not as heartily believe JESUS CHRIST to have been an impoſtor, as we do *Mahomet*.

IF this plea of the apprehenſion, that GOD's judgment will follow on the toleration of hereſy and infidelity, had any ſincerity in it, would not chriſtians, more eſpecially proteſtants, make a difference between thoſe whom they diſagree with in the very fundamentals of religion, and others, who profeſs the ſame faith in every article, and only differ from them in church

church government, and outward ceremonies? And could a national clergy behold chriſtian princes confer honours, and conſequently publick marks of eſteem on jews without the leaſt complaint, and at the ſame time be as loud as thunder in preſſing them to degrade presbyterians? but jews cannot interfere with the temporal intereſt of the national clergy; ſchiſmaticks may. Here is the danger; from this corner the evil is expected which they dread.

We often value our ſelves on our zeal againſt popery, and that no proteſtant church has produced more able divines to oppoſe it, and refute the champions of it, than that of *England*. This is true, and no proteſtants have ſtood more in need of them; for the court of *Rome* has taken more pains to regain this kingdom than they have beſtowed on any other proteſtant country. But when that is over, and the danger of popery ſeems to be remov'd further off, our clergy exert themſelves with the ſame warmth againſt any other adverſary who dares to diſſent from them, to diſturb their tranquillity, and rouſe

rouſe their anger, by denying their authority: many of them have not ſcrupled publickly to profeſs a greater averſion to presbytery, than they had for popery, and conſtrued the very proximity of their opinions, to the diſadvantage of their antagoniſts; alledging, that the leſs the difference was between them, the greater muſt be the obſtinacy of the diſſenters in refuſing conformity.

NATIONAL churches only love and hate occaſionally, as it ſuits their intereſt, and as every vice is made the worſt, when it is particularly preached againſt, ſo every adverſary of a national church becomes the blackeſt in his turn, when the clergy have a mind more directly to vent their anger againſt him. Murder and adultery are heinous crimes; but what is ſo bad as ſchiſm?— But ſuppoſing it to be ſuch a damnable ſin, as is told us with ſo much heat and violence, it can only be ſo to thoſe who are the occaſion of it.

IF a man, led away by ambition, revenge, or any other paſſion to be gratified, ſeparates himſelf from the commu-

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nion he belong'd to for a trifle, infuſes his notions into others, and endeavouring to gain proſelytes to his opinion, by all imaginable cunning, draws great numbers from the national and eſtabliſhed church, his crime is unpardonable, and himſelf a wicked ſeducer of the people. We will ſuppoſe likewiſe that his followers, who ran aſtray with him, are involved in part of his guilt; but it is not, like the ſin of *Adam*, entail'd upon all their poſterity to the world's end.

WHEN a ſchiſm has remain'd for ſeveral generations, has been examin'd, look'd into, and the ſovereign power, having found it to bring neither diſhonour to GOD, nor detriment to the ſociety, thinks fit to tolerate it in an authentick manner, it then becomes a lawful worſhip, which it is criminal to diſturb: nothing is more ſacred to people than their religion; and a conſcientious man, what ſect ſoever he is of, will always take care to have his children, from their infancy, imbued with the doctrine which himſelf prefers to all others, and never ſuffer them to attend any other worſhip than what, in his opinion,

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is the moſt acceptable to GOD. Men would not have children diſobey their parents, or a pupil his governor, and before they are capable of judging for themſelves, rather follow a ſtranger than thoſe who are entruſted with their education.

WHEN people are arrived to years of diſcretion, and begin to perceive they have been brought up in an error, there is no doubt but they ought to leave it; and if, being convinc'd of it, they perſiſt in it, they commit a ſin; but how ſhall we be ſure that they are convinc'd of their error, and how ſhall we know that their ſcruples are not really conſcientious? A national church ſeldom acknowledges the ſincerity of ſchiſmaticks; no proofs are convincing. When they have made oath of it, the orthodox have told them they were perjur'd; nay, ſhould they ſeal their teſtimony with their blood, and dye for their faith, they muſt expect only to be derided for their pains; for a ſchiſmatick can be no [a] martyr. Great numbers of

[a] Cyprian de unitate, Epiſt. 52. ad Antonian.

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Marcionites and [a] other hereticks, that were perſecuted by the orthodox of the primitive church, ſuffer'd death for their opinions with great conſtancy; but they never were ſtiled martyrs but by their own ſects.

THE crown of martyrdom can only be attain'd to by the orthodox: all the books of martyrs of the proteſtants are deſpis'd and ſcoff'd at by the church of *Rome*, and the vaſt multitudes ſhe has maſſacred for the reformed religion in *England*, *France*, and other parts of *Europe*, are in her language no more than obſtinate hereticks, that have been puniſh'd for their impieties. The proteſtants had it not long in their power before they imitated the church of *Rome*, and the *Lutherans* in *Saxony*, and the *Calviniſts* in *Holland*, have treated the anabaptiſts in the ſame manner: theſe ſchiſmaticks, in the beginning of the ſixteenth century, have publiſhed two books of martyrs, one at *Harlem* and another at *Horn*, in which they complain as much of the tyranny of the *Lutherans*

[a] Euſeb. *and ſee* Maimbourg's *Hiſtory of* Calviniſm.

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and *Calviniſts*, as theſe do of the papiſts: but they have receiv'd the ſame anſwer, that has been given to all hereticks a great many hundred years ago, which is the ſaying of St. *Cyprian*, *That* [a] *it is not the puniſhment, but the cauſe, that makes the martyr.* And what national church will allow the cauſe of ſchiſmaticks to be a good one?

THE generality of men are ſo wedded to, and ſo obſtinately fond of their own opinion, and a doctrine they have been imbued with from their cradle, that they cannot think any one ſincere, who, being acquainted with it, refuſes to embrace it. This holds in all religions, the *Mahometan*, and moſt abſurd of the *Pagans* not excepted.

AS there is nothing human minds may more widely differ in than in what concerns religious matters, ſo there is no opinion ſo monſtrouſly deſpicable, but ſome may adhere to it with zeal and ſincerity; whilſt others with the ſame ſincerity may have ſentiments not perfectly agreeing with

[a] Cyprian ubi ſupra.

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any opinion, [a] that is known. About the middle of the laſt century, whilſt the *Trinitarians* were accuſing one another of believing *Tritheiſm*, and the unity of GOD was ſtrenuouſly aſſerted among the proteſtants, the chevalier *Borri* [a] ſtarted a notion among the *Roman* catholicks, that the Virgin *Mary* was a real goddeſs, and a fourth perſon in the divinity. The emperor *Alexander* had in his palace an oratory, [b] where he went early in the morning to practiſe religious ceremonies in honour of the patrons he had made choice of. Here he had, with the effigies of his anceſtors, thoſe of very good princes, who had been deify'd, and other holy men, and among them *Apollonius Tyaneus*, JESUS CHRIST, *Abraham*, *Orpheus*, and ſuch like gods, ſays my author. Nothing can be more unaccountable than the mix'd worſhip of that emperor, or the notion he muſt have had of the Deity; yet *Lampridius*, who wrote his life, and informs us

[a] *He was burnt in Effigy at* Rome, *with his Writings, by the Hands of the Executioner*, January 3. 1661. Vita de Cavagliere Borri.

[b] Lamprid. in Alexand. Severo.

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of this, ſpeaks of him as of a virtuous, ſincere and devout prince.

THE famous [a] *Hugo Grotius* had for many years before his death not been of any communion at all, [b] for which ſome have had a very ill opinion of him, and call him atheiſt; but a learned apologiſt [c] of that great man has demonſtrated how unjuſt as well as uncharitable, it is to fancy, that a man has no religion, when he joins with none of the factions that condemn mankind, and each of which pretends to be the only church of CHRIST. Fear and ſuperſtition may make men fly to devotions, that are inconſiſtent together, and a penetrating judgment may have ſcruples which others cannot ſee, yet both act with ſincerity.

ONE of the greateſt reaſons why ſchiſmaticks and diſſenters are call'd hypocrites by the orthodox, is, becauſe, generally ſpeaking, they lead better lives, or at leaſt are more circumſpect in their lan-

[a] *See a Book call'd*, Sentiments de quelques Theologiciens d' Hollande.

[b] Idem.

[c] Idem.

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guage and behaviour. Thoſe who would reform more ſtrictly than others, muſt ſhew it in ſomething: this nettles the orthodox, becauſe they are obliged by it either to be more upon their guard themſelves, or elſe run the risk of being thought worſe of, than thoſe they condemn. Wherefore to avoid the ill opinion of others, and likewiſe the trouble they find in amendment, they call their adverſaries hypocrites, in hopes, that by undervaluing the ſtrictneſs of their manners they ſhall conceal the turpitude of their own.

How deſignedly ſoever virtue and piety may be counterfeited by ſome crafty deceivers, many of their followers, drawn in by outward appearances, may ſet about reforming themſelves in good earneſt, vaſt multitudes may be new modell'd and reform'd after this manner by art and aſſiduity. The prince of *Conde's* army in *France* had more devout men, and was infinitely leſs corrupt in manners than the leaguers, and the round-heads of *Oliver Cromwel* were much leſs debauch'd than the cavaliers of the king. Such refor-

mations may laſt for a while, but human nature of it ſelf will relapſe in time; and however, power, authority, victory, and ſucceſs, can never fail of relaxing mens morals.

BUT if hypocriſy be not laid to the charge of ſchiſmaticks, their actions at leaſt, even the beſt are diſcommended, if not miſconſtrued, and they can do nothing that is praiſe-worthy in the eyes of the orthodox. During the perſecution the anabaptiſts labour'd under beyond ſea, above an hundred and fifty years ago, a moderate *Calviniſt* [a] enquiring into the reaſon how theſe deluded people could gain ſo many proſelytes, named three things, which he aſſigned as the chief cauſe of their perverting and ſeducing ſuch great numbers. The continual quotations of ſcripture texts their teachers made uſe of, the great ſhew they made of outward holineſs, and their conſtancy in ſuffering and dying. By the firſt, he ſays, they make the poor ignorant people ſtand amaz'd,

[a] Guy de Bres. Racine Source & Fondement des Anabaptiſtes.

and

and imagine them to be great doctors, though what they quote is without ſenſe, judgment or reaſon: but he deſires them to conſider, that there never was any heretick in the world, but what made uſe of the ſcripture, corrupting and wreſting it to maintain his blaſphemies, though the ſcripture gives no ground for errors and hereſies; but that they proceed from a quite contrary cauſe, as CHRIST ſays, and here he quotes theſe words of our Saviour. *Do you not therefore err, becauſe you know not the ſcriptures?*

As to the ſecond thing by which they ſeduced ſilly people, their pretended holineſs, he proves by ſome examples, that it is often the character of falſe doctors. To ſolve the third, he gives them the anſwer of St. *Cyprian*, which I have quoted above; and as for the reſt, treats them with pity and contempt. The *Roman* catholicks have done the very ſame to the Hugonots in *France*: the reformed, they ſaid, ſpoke of nothing but of the bible, and quoted it continually. They were againſt dancing, fine cloaths, going to the

tavern, *&c.* and many of them ſuffer'd with conſtancy for their religion. The difficulties were the ſame, and ſo were the anſwers to ſolve them. There are other countries, and of proteſtants too, where the uſage of the orthodox to the ſchiſmaticks has not been very unlike to what I have mention'd. It is deplorable, that the proteſtants are forc'd to make uſe of the ſame arguments againſt their ſchiſmaticks, which the papiſts before have uſed againſt the proteſtants, and which ſo many reform'd divines have ſo ſucceſsfully, and ſo often refuted.

It is evident then, that there is no characteriſtick to diſtinguiſh and know a true church from a falſe one. The arguments for toleration or perſecution, as they are occaſionally wanted, are the ſame in the one, as they are in the other; in the behaviour likewiſe between national churches, and thoſe who diſſent from them, countries differ but little. The language and actions are very near the ſame throughout chriſtendom. The ſchiſmaticks reject all human authority, quote ſcripture, talk of reaſon, and deſire toleration:

leration: the orthodox ſtand upon their prerogative of elderſhip, puniſhing of hereticks, and deſire the aſſiſtance of the ſecular arm: whenever the ſchiſmaticks can make their opinion national, they are orthodox, and ſerve all other innovators, juſt as they were ſerv'd before.

EVERY body knows how heartily the *French* proteſtants cry'd out for toleration in their laſt perſecution; they would have been ſatisfy'd with a bare connivance, a ſufferance under penalties, or any thing in the world to ſave their lives and eſtates, without renouncing their religion. Yet ſome of them, who had narrowly eſcap'd the watchful dragoons, and thought it a happineſs to become fugitives and refugees in foreign countries, chang'd immediately with their circumſtances their tolerating tempers; and one [a] of them, who has made himſelf much talk'd of on [b] another account, as ſoon as he was e-

[a] Peter Jurieu.

[b] *A Prophecy of the deſtruction of the World, which prov'd falſe during his Life-time.*

ſtabliſh'd

ſtabliſh'd in a great city of *Holland*, [a] openly preach'd and excited the civil power to perſecution with great violence, not only againſt the *Socinians*, but likewiſe the *Arminians*, or as they call themſelves, *Remonſtrants*, which latter are very numerous in that place.

He told the magiſtrates, that it was their duty to extirpate hereſy and infidelity, that the true church could not flouriſh without the ſupport of the ſecular arm, and that chriſtianity it ſelf could not have ſpread, as it has done, if chriſtian emperors and other princes had not aſſiſted the propagation of it by deſtroying the heathen idols, diſtreſſing their prieſts, and demoliſhing their temples. What ſervice this language in the mouth of a refugee muſt have been of to the diſtreſſed brethren, he had left behind him, I leave the reader to judge. What is true in *Holland* muſt be the ſame in *France*.

It is incredible, how all churches and prieſts have borrow'd of one another. The fathers of the primitive church them-

[a] Rotterdam.

ſelves

ſelves learn'd perſecution, and to juſtify it, of the jews and heathens. I have ſaid more than once, what a wretched and deſpicable theology the *Pagans* had; and yet *Celſus*, *Symmachus*, *Porphiry*, *Hierocles*, and other orators and philoſophers who have wrote in defence of their national and eſtabliſhed church, and againſt the innovations of the goſpel, have treated the chriſtians with no more regard or ceremony, than a haughty rigoriſt of the orthodox would a ſweet ſinger of *Iſrael*, a *French* prophet, or any the moſt ſenſeleſs enthuſiaſt: one of thoſe I have named, and who was a great courtier, had compos'd a book againſt chriſtianity, which *Lactantius* has anſwer'd, and Dr. *Cave* thinks, [a] but very indifferently. But the general account that father gives of it is worth reading.

He *profeſs'd* (theſe [b] are the words of *Lactantius*) *that above all things it was the duty of a philoſopher to aſſiſt men in drawing them from their errors, and call them back*

[a] *Dr.* Cave Hiſtor. literat. Script. Eccl. in parte 2.

[b] Lactantius Divin. inſtitut. *lib.* 5. *c.* 2.

again

again into the right way which is the worſhip of the gods, by whoſe greatneſs and majeſty (he ſaid forſooth) the world was governed, and not ſuffer the ignorant to be drawn away by the impoſtures of ſome men. That therefore he had taken upon him that office worthy of philoſophy, that he might carry the light of wiſdom before thoſe, who were in the dark; not only that by worſhipping the gods they might be reſtor'd to their ſound minds, but likewiſe that having laid down their ſtubborn obſtinacy they might avoid the torments of the body, and not chuſe to endure the cruel manglings of their limbs for nothing. But that it might appear what it was, that had made him take the pains of compoſing that work, he launch'd out in the praiſes of the princes, whoſe piety and providence (as he call'd it) had, as in all other human affairs, been more eminently conſpicuous in their defending the religion of the gods. That at laſt, ſuch care was taken of the intereſt of mankind, that, the ſuperſtition, which was impious and only befitting [a] *old women, being ſuppreſs'd, the whole uni-*

[a] Impia & anili Superſtitione.

verſe

verſe ſhould join in the true worſhip of the gods, and be made ſenſible of their mercies.

How many flatterers of perſecuting tyrants have in later times copy'd after this *Pagan*, I ſhall not ſtay to examine; this I know, that what I have quoted would with little alteration have ſerv'd a member of the academy of ſciences, in his addreſſes to the late grand monarch, after his extirpation of ſchiſm. But the chief uſe I would make of it is, to ſhew the poſſibility, that national churches may treat their betters with contempt; that it is no new thing for perſecutors to pretend the good of mens ſouls, and their general happineſs; and that no monſtrouſneſs or abſurdity in publick worſhip, or eſtabliſhed opinions, can ever hinder the champions of them from inſulting, and aſſuming airs of ſuperiority over ſchiſmaticks, tho' of the moſt rational and ſolid principles.

I am very much miſtaken, if a ſerious reflection on what has been ſaid hitherto, will not furniſh a thinking man, with many arguments for toleration; what I be-

gan this chapter with is none of the leaſt, I mean, that ſchiſm, where once it has been ſuffer'd, can never be cur'd, but by an utter extirpation of the limbs infected, and a ſteddy cruelty, zealouſly purſued without pity or remorſe. That this is not my own private opinion, one of the moſt polite authors of the age ſhall witneſs. [a] *Nothing* (ſays he) *is more ridiculous in reſpect of policy, or ſo wrong and odious in reſpect of common humanity, as a moderate and half way perſecution. It only frets the ſore; it raiſes the ill humour of mankind; excites the keener ſpirits; moves indignation in beholders; and ſows the very ſeeds of ſchiſm in mens boſoms. A reſolute and bold fac'd perſecution leaves no time or ſcope for theſe engendring diſtempers, or gathering ill humours. It does the work at once; by extirpation, baniſhment, or maſſacre, and like a bold ſtroke in ſurgery, diſpatches by one ſhort amputation, what a bungling hand would make worſe and worſe to the perpetual ſufferance and miſery of the patient.*

[a] *Lord* Shaftsbury's Characteriſt. 3 *vol.*

In *Italy*, *Spain*, and *Portugal*, where an heretick is knock'd down the moment he riſes, and the church has a proper power obey'd by the government, to enquire into a man's conſcience before he opens his mouth, and puniſh him for what the holy office ſhall fancy him to think; a ſtrict conformity in manner of worſhip, once eſtabliſh'd, may be maintain'd with little bloodſhed: otherwiſe it is never to be procur'd, but by the remedy preſcrib'd, *viz.* the utmoſt violence and barbarity.

It is evident then that the method now in uſe among the proteſtant churches, to deſtroy ſchiſm, is wrong; that their endeavours are fruitleſs, and as little likely to meet with ſucceſs, as would be a man's labour, who, to make another his friend, ſhould load him with calumnies, and ſlip no opportunity to vex him. The bold reformers, that could ſway a ſtate, are deſunct. The ages grow wiſer, and bigotry now is a rarity in princes. The reform'd clergy have given up their ſtrength by their own act and deed. Men only expoſe themſelves by threatning, what every body knows they can't execute.

Reaſoning, good humour and perſuaſions are more likely to convince men, and draw them from their errors, than menaces without power. [a] *Mere threats*, ſays the learned nobleman I juſt now quoted, *without power of execution, are only exaſperating and provocative. They who are maſters of the carnal as well as the ſpiritual weapons, may apply each at their pleaſure, and in what proportion they think neceſſary. But where the magiſtrate reſolves ſteddily to reſerve his faſces for his own proper province, and keep the edge tools and deadly inſtruments out of other hands, 'tis in vain for ſpiritual pretenders to take ſuch magiſterial airs. It can then only become them to brandiſh ſuch arms, when they have ſtrength enough to make the magiſtrate reſign his office, and become provoſt, or executioner, in their ſervice.*

BUT the greateſt argument for toleration is, that differences in opinion can do no hurt, if all clergy-men are kept in awe, and no more independent on the ſtate than the laity; whereas the calamities that may

[a] Idem.

attend

attend perſecution, are endleſs. I am not ignorant of the miſchiefs that are to be apprehended from an exceſſive toleration, accompany'd with, or perhaps proceeding from, a remiſneſs in the government; but this ought to be avoided as much as perſecution. Beſides, when I ſpeak up for a toleration of different ſects, I mean only, ſuch as ſhall own the government to be the ſupream authority upon earth, both in church and ſtate, and have no other maſter abroad, that may make them plot againſt our ſafety. It is on this head only that papiſts and *Non-Jurors* ought to be excluded; but this being the buſineſs of the ſtate, the clergy has nothing to do with it.

IT is the government and the miniſtry of it, which ought to be watchful, and take care that the publick receives no detriment from ſubtle ſtratagems carried on under religious pretences. I can't help thinking in this place on the innumerable treacheries of chriſtians, and the execrable manner, in which chriſtianity has been propagated by the modern apoſtles. That ſcanty portion which *America* has

been bleſs'd with, coſts them, beſides all their immenſe treaſure, vaſt dominions, and their liberty, by the *Spaniard*'s own confeſſion, the lives of twenty millions of *Indians*.

A *Spaniard* [a] being ask'd by the king of *Toſſa*, how the king of *Spain* became maſter of ſo great tracts of land in both hemiſpheres, he too honeſtly anſwered, *That he ſent monks to preach the goſpel in foreign nations, and that after they had converted a good number of* Pagans, *he ſent his troops, which, joining with the new chriſtians, ſubdued the Country.* This happen'd in *Japan*, and gave a plauſible pretence to the *Bonzes* to ſollicite the extirpation of the chriſtians; which was executed, and has very much encreas'd the martyrology [b] of the Jeſuits, by whoſe induſtry great numbers of the inhabitants had already embraced the goſpel. The *Japoneſe*, it is certain, underſtood not their ſpiritual intereſt: but conſidering that theſe

[a] Hiſtoir. des ouvrages des Savans. Sept. 1691.

[b] Eccleſ. Hiſt. *of* Japan. *By* Francis Solier, *a Jeſuit.*

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idolaters knew not the true GOD, and the inſtructive example they had of our converſions, and the fruits of them before their eyes, I don't ſee, how we can blame their politicks, when they had nothing, but either an active or a paſſive perſecution to chuſe.

IF this be a digreſſion, I hope it will not be thought an unprofitable one, as long as it repreſents to us the neceſſity all governments lye under, of guarding themſelves againſt the manifold machinations, which under the falſe appearances of piety and devotion, muſt be deſtructive to the ſtate. I would have it likewiſe ſerve to ſatisfy the reader, that, when I adviſe the laity to keep the clergy in awe, I mean all clergy-men and religious teachers in general, and would by no means exclude the diſſenters. No diſcourſes nor even prayers, which have the leaſt tendency to ſedition, ſhould be ſuffer'd in any aſſembly: 'tis the buſineſs of a careful miniſtry to look into theſe matters, and the leaſt conventicle ought not to be neglected.

WHEN laymen, who cannot comply with either the doctrine or rites of a church by law eſtabliſhed, are not ſtinted in their birth-right, but enjoy all the temporal privileges and immunities in common with other ſubjects, they ought to ask for no more, as to ſpiritual matters, than that they may think what they pleaſe, ſerve GOD, and educate their children, their own way, without being diſturb'd, be inſtructed by teachers of their own choice, and have the liberty of building houſes for divine worſhip, when and where they think fit. If they make higher demands, which no layman would of himſelf, they ought to be deny'd and rebuk'd, and their teachers, who put them upon it, corrected.

A good government in all countries pays a deference to the national church, and no liberty of conſcience ought to interfere with her juſt rights. The publick temples and ſchools ought to be ſacred to her, and their revenues unqueſtionably due to thoſe only who teach her doctrine. If it be objected, that from what I have already proved from the temper of the clergy

clergy in general, it muſt neceſſarily follow, that, where there is ſo great a toleration, the diſſenters will be encroaching, and never leave undermining the national church, and that what has been may be again, I readily anſwer, that this never was nor can be done, unleſs the laity join with their clergy in miſchief, which I would prevent.

It is to deter men from this I take this pains. Had the laity refus'd to pull down the *Perſian* temple, when *Abdas* bid them, the chriſtians would have prevented a cruel perſecution. The buſineſs of clergy-men is to teach us our ſeveral duties toward God and man, to aſſiſt us in all the performances of religious worſhip, and ſhew us the way to ſalvation: whenever they talk to us of other matters by way of inſtruction, they exceed their commiſſion. But if at any time they would perſuade or exhort us to any thing, that may be deſtructive to the publick tranquillity, or leſſening the authority of the government, or mutual concord, we ought immediately to leave them, or elſe reſolve to be deaf to all the

flights

flights of either wit or eloquence, that might charm or ſeduce us.

ONCE for all, the goſpel teaches us obedience to ſuperiors, and charity to all men; and if the miniſters of it will, to their own damnation, preach ſeditiouſly, and be the trumpeters of rebellion, it is not our fault; but it is in our power to hearken to, or deſpiſe them, as then they deſerve we ſhould. And what madneſs is it to liſten to the *Syren*'s ſong, when ſhe tunes her voice for our deſtruction? Civil wars may begin in the pulpit, but they are not decided there. All the loſſes and calamities of them fall upon the people. The clergy may ſound to battle, but the laity muſt fight it out. It is in vain likewiſe to ask what principle the clergy are of, or whether they belong to a national or tolerated church, when once they are incens'd. In *France* the lawfulneſs of killing of heretick princes, and paſſive obedience, have been preach'd and maintain'd by the ſame people in leſs than two years time. Whoever is openly inſincere, cannot ask that we ſhould believe him, and all who ſtand up for the doctrine of paſſive obedi-

obedience to the civil powers in being from a principle of chriſtianity, will never be active in offending it.

THE difference in the principles of the clergy, is not ſo great as many imagine, and to underſtand them is of no uſe to the laity in any country, when once they come to fight for them; for when half of a nation is maſſacred by mutual fury, the deſolate remainder will find but little comfort in knowing which party began the quarrel. There are eye-witneſſes yet alive of our paſt misfortunes, and confuſions from inteſtine broils: may no futurity behold any other! but let us endeavour to forget them, and no pen be ever more employ'd to clear the doubtfulneſs of their cauſes. We may, under a diſcipline, leſs melancholly, learn wiſdom from the folly of our neighbours.

IT will by many be thought injudicious, not to have ended this chapter before now; but a reader, as calm as my ſelf, will have patience, before we leave it, to read two or three ſcraps of hiſtory, which are not foreign to our purpoſe.

THE

THE leapings [a] of *Macon* are very famous in *France*, and have been mention'd by more authors, than the cruelties of *Tiberius* in the isle of [b] *Caprea*. The place I speak of, is a city upon the *Soane* in the dutchy of *Burgundy*. The [c] *Hugonots* in the religious wars, in the year 1562, made themselves masters of it by force, broke down the images of the churches, and suppress'd the *Roman* religion. They took it in *May*, and it was retaken by the *Roman* catholicks in *August*, during which small time a vast treasure was heap'd up in it. It was sack'd and plundered; the exercise of the *Romish* religion was restor'd, and the priests and monks with their whores, of which they had abundance, return'd to their former state. To compleat the misfortunes of the reformed, the government was given to St. *Poinct*, a man of a sanguinary and cruel temper, who for his pastime, after he had feasted the ladies, was used to ask,

[a] *Call'd in French*, Sauteries de Macon.
[b] Suetonius in Tiberio.
[c] Beza Hist. Eccles. *lib.* 15.

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whether the farce, which was call'd the farce of St. *Poinct*, was ready to be acted. This was, as it were, the watch-word, by which his people were wont to bring out one or two priſoners, and ſometimes more, whom they carry'd to the bridge of the *Soane*; and when they appear'd there with their wives, after he had ask'd them ſome pretty and pleaſant queſtions, he caus'd them to be thrown down head-long, and drown'd in the river. It was alſo a uſual thing, to give falſe alarms, and upon that pretence to ſhoot ſome priſoner, or any other of the reform'd religion whom he could catch, charging them with a deſign to betray the city.

THE *Hugonots* perhaps might flatter themſelves with a notion, that (as this was done by the papiſts) proteſtants could not be guilty of ſuch enormities; if they had not upon record the barbarous treatment which the garriſon of [a] *Monbriſſon*, who, having compounded to ſurrender the town, was retir'd into the caſtle, received

[a] Varillas Hiſt. de Charles IX.

from

from a [a] proteſtant general; who would divert himſelf with ſeeing thoſe miſerable ſoldiers precipitated. They were brought to the top of the platform above the tower; thoſe, who had not the courage to precipitate themſelves, were caſt down headlong, and not ſo much as their chief, the brave *Moncelas*, was pardon'd. It is reported likewiſe, that the baron's ſoldiers, as barbarous as their general, receiv'd thoſe, who were thrown down from the tower, with horrid cries and ſhouts upon the points of their halberts and pikes.

THIS was done contrary to a ſolemn capitulation, and all the excuſe that was made for this breach of the publick faith, was, what, after the firſt unkindeſs ſhewn on either ſide, becomes immediately the common plea in all civil wars, repriſals. What he did, the baron ſaid, was to revenge in part the barbarities that had been committed after the ſacking of *Orange*: that city indeed had been the ſcene of

[a] Francis de Beaumont Baron des Adrets, *one of the Noblemen, whoſe Courage and Military Actions made the greateſt noiſe in the religious Wars under* Charles IX.

triumph-

triumphant and elaborate cruelty, and all thoſe, who had the misfortune to outlive the firſt fury, and fell not by merciful maſſacre, were reſerv'd for exquiſite torments, and the moſt ſhameful abuſes and mutilations. So ingenious was their barbarity, that to ſhew emblematically, that their quarrels were religious, ſeveral proteſtants of both ſexes were put to the fire, larded with ſlips of paper torn from *Geneva* bibles.

THESE are ſome of the fruits of the large crop, that may be gather'd from religious quarrels, the certain and undoubted offspring of the intemperate diſcourſes of ſeditious prieſts of either ſide, which if hearken'd to by the laity, can never fail of plunging them into civil wars. Oh! had I skill and eloquence to deſcribe them in their full and terrible extent, and inſpire my readers with a horror and deteſtation, ſufficient to guard them againſt the firſt approaches, and make them ſhrink from the remoteſt tendencies to thoſe unhappy wretched times, in which trade and all commerce are dead, and no merchandize valuable, that cannot be employ'd for the deſtruction

ſtruction of ones country! When wealth and property are precarious, and nothing certain but ruin and devaſtation; when all arts and ſciences languiſh and are ſhov'd aſide by rudeneſs and brutality, and no wit or ingenuity applauded, but what teaches men how to be inhuman; till at laſt the utmoſt barbarity and refined cruelties become the diverſion of the moſt polite.

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

Of the Reciprocal Duties between the Clergy and the Laity.

AS in an universities, precedency, above other faculties, is given to that of theology, so the function of a divine, the ministry of the gospel is an employment to which every member of the society ought to pay deference and respect; and moreover, every clergy-man, who discharges his duty as he should do, has a just title to the love and affection, as well as veneration and esteem of the publick. In this place many perhaps will suspect my sincerity, and be ready to tell me, that had my design been to procure the clergy the favour or affection of the laity, I would have set them in another light than I have

done. To remove this ſuſpicion, I muſt put the reader in mind, that to judge impartially, we ought to view things on all ſides, and that all men ought to be conſider'd two different ways.

FIRST, as to their occupation, the ſtation of life, which either choice or neceſſity has put them in. And here we chiefly mind the uſefulneſs and dignity of their callings, their capacities, with all qualifications requir'd for the exerciſe or performance of their functions. In this view we have no regard for the perſons themſelves, but only the benefit they may be of to the publick, if they pleaſe and their ſervice be wanted; and they are only look'd upon as parts and members of the whole ſociety.

SECONDLY, every perſon is to be conſider'd as an entire individual, a wonderful machine, endued with thought and a will independent of any thing viſible from without. In this view we look upon him as a neceſſitous being, ſubject to hunger and thirſt, and having many paſſions to gratify, and at the ſame time a vaſt compound, a leſſer world, with a ſovereignty,

and

and court of judicature within, having a private welfare and preſervation of his own to mind, altogether abſtract from the good of the publick.

MEN are naturally ſelfiſh, unruly, and head-ſtrong creatures, what makes them ſociable is their neceſſity and conſciouſneſs of ſtanding in need of each others help, to make life comfortable; and what makes this aſſiſtance voluntarily given and laſting, are the gains or profit accruing to induſtry for ſervices it does to others, which in a well order'd ſociety enables every body, who in ſome thing or other will be ſerviceable to the publick, to purchaſe the aſſiſtance of others in other inſtances. And as all the conveniencies, and chief comforts of life depend, in a great meaſure, on the labour and the ſervices of others, ſo he that is able to purchaſe moſt of them, is in the vogue of the world reckoned the moſt happy.

THE uſefulneſs of ſetting all mankind in theſe two different views, will ſoon appear, if we but conſult our own experience, and take notice of what all mankind ſeems the moſt inclin'd to. All the world agrees,

that the good of the whole ſociety, or the majority of it, ought to be preferr'd to the advantages of private perſons, yet every body may find, that he loves himſelf better than he does all the reſt of mankind. Nay, we are taught to do ſo from our infancy; the firſt thing our nurſes bid us is to take care of our ſelves. The ſame charge we receive a thouſand times over from our parents, tutors, and all that are entruſted with our education. As ſoon as we truſt children with money, we teach them to keep it. When young men talk of marrying, we bid them look out for a fortune, and blame them if they diſregard it. A prudent father may caution his ſon againſt cowardice, fraud, or ſordid avarice, becauſe thoſe vices make men deſpis'd in the world, but he won't bid him laviſh away his money, or be unmindful of his ſafety.

ALL men are taught to diſplay themſelves to the beſt advantage, to defend themſelves againſt injuſtice and oppreſſion, not to be neglectful of their eſtate, their dignity, or their reputation in the world. This is call'd human prudence, and all the

heroick flights of love and friendſhip, publick ſpiritedneſs to ones ruin, and the contempt of death to any extreme, are look'd upon as romantick notions only fit for knight-errantry, and are laugh'd out of countenance by thoſe, who beſt underſtand the world. A good man it is likely will wiſh that his children may be uſeful in their generation, and become remarkably beneficial to their country; and this he may do very heartily for his country's ſake, for their ſake, and his own: but whilſt he is conſulting what profeſſion or employment he is to bring them up to, what he looks for is to procure them a livelihood; his chief view is their maintenance and eſtabliſhment, with little regard to the publick.

HISTORY and experience teach us, that in purſuance of the maxims of this worldly wiſdom, moſt men have in all ages beheld themſelves in the ſecond view, and every body looks upon his own dear perſon, as an individual, if not independent being, which he is oblig'd every way to gratify and take care of, very often forgetting that they are members of the ſociety. Men

can't

can't help thinking, that their employment, and the dignity of it, are as much their own as their parts and features; for which reaſon the generality of them convert the whole produce, the ſplendour, the authority, and all profits and emoluments accruing from both to their own private uſe and advantage, and moreover count themſelves good honeſt men, if they endeavour not to make more of either than common cuſtom, decency, and the laws of the land allow of.

WE ought therefore to diſtinguiſh between the deſign of an employment in its original, and what it may be degenerated into, between the real uſe and worth of a calling, and what it may be perverted to; and whenever it is objected, that the laity can have no reaſon, nor the leaſt inducement to love and eſteem the clergy for what I have repreſented them to be, for ſix chapters together, I ſhall anſwer, that if they had nothing but their faults, it is true; but that the ſame may be ſaid of all profeſſions, when we look upon the wrong ſide of them.

How

How can we like lawyers, who, if they diſlike their fee, will neglect a cauſe, where your whole welfare, and perhaps the life of an innocent man is at ſtake; or phyſicians, who, for the ſame reaſon, will leave you to your ſelf in a moſt dangerous illneſs, and let you dye rather than not gratify either their avarice or their pride? Theſe things are often done, and chiefly by the moſt eminent in both profeſſions.

No joy is perfect, and nothing is compleat upon earth. The beſt of things are liable to flaws and inconveniencies. Men have been choak'd with bread. But what the neceſſity of human affairs requires, the ſociety cannot be without, tho' it has its faults. An army of the beſt ſoldiers in the world is inſignificant without a good general; yet, how many of theſe, when they they have been diſguſted, have left their country expoſed to the moſt imminent danger, and fought againſt it! But then on the other hand, how often has a general, in the moſt critical juncture, ſaved his country from perdition? Lawyers likewiſe and phyſicians are of great uſe to the publick; many caſes made intricate by villainous

lainous craft, are by able pleaders set in their true light, in favour of justice and honesty. The estates of widows and orphans are often retriev'd by the vigilance and penetration of a learned council, and rescu'd from the usurpation of the mighty, that without such an assistance would have been lost for ever. Then what a saviour was the lawyer! So the most dangerous distempers are daily cur'd by the knowing, sagacious physician, that without his help would, in all human probability, have prov'd mortal. When this happens to a great and industrious trader at a time his death would have been the ruin of several thriving families, or a man, whose life afterwards proves advantageous to the publick in an extraordinary manner, then what a blessing, and how God-like was the physician who saved him!

But if health and estate are dear to us in this short stage of life, we ought to have a much greater regard for a futurity, which shall last for ever. Few have leisure and ability both, to read and examine the scriptures, as they ought, for the thorough understanding of them; and all have

not

not knowledge ſufficient to work out their own ſalvation. Vice ſhould be continually expos'd, and ſinners reprov'd, and there is hardly a chriſtian ſo mindful of his duty, as never to ſtand in need of admonition, or not to want ſometimes to be exhorted to true piety and good actions. The rude multitude ſhould be made acquainted with the heinouſneſs of ſin, and thoſe on whom the love of GOD has little influence, and the joys of heaven make no impreſſion, ought to be ſcar'd from evil-doing by the terrors of hell: for this reaſon, no calling or profeſſion is ſo generally uſeful to a chriſtian nation, as the miniſtry of the goſpel, and no ſet of men more abſolutely neceſſary than ſpiritual guides, to lead and encourage us in the difficult path of virtue, and ſhew us the way to eternal happineſs.

MANY will wonder, why I ſhould go ſo far about to tell them what few people doubt of, that the function of divines deſerves the higheſt reſpect, and is, in dignity, ſuperiour to all other profeſſions: but I deſire thoſe ſuperficial judges to conſider, that this was not the only thing I

had to mind. I very well knew what, in the foregoing chapters, I had ſaid againſt the clergy; and how I have, in many places, endeavour'd to demonſtrate, that ſoon after the time of the apoſtles, the holy order, ſet up by thoſe true divines, degenerated from its glorious original; and that the chriſtian clergy, when once the miniſtry of the goſpel became a publick calling, an employ which men were brought up to for a livelihood, ſoon imitated the examples before them, behaved themſelves like other prieſts, and ſtudying more their own temporal advantage than the ſpiritual good of others, made their holy function, contrary to the intent of it, ſubſervient to their own perſonal greatneſs, authority, and other worldly ends, and very often to the worſt of purpoſes.

THIS, I ſay, I knew very well; and as I was likewiſe conſcious to my ſelf, that I had not done it with a deſign to render the clergy odious, I was reſolv'd not to remain under the ſuſpicion of it, and therefore was forc'd to avoid an imputation I did not deſerve, to ſearch further into human nature, and the origin of ſociety it

ſelf,

ſelf, than otherwiſe there would have been occaſion for; that the knowledge of what paſſes in every one's own breaſt, might convince them, that I have ſaid nothing of the clergy but what ought to be expected from all mankind under the ſame circumſtances and temptations.

We ſee, that every body makes the moſt of his buſineſs for himſelf; that thoſe of the ſame profeſſion often combine together and form themſelves into companies and ſocieties, to conſult and promote the general intereſt and welfare of their profeſſion, in order to render it as profitable and honourable to themſelves as it is poſſible: that, though the publick good is the ſpecious pretence for erecting of thoſe companies, what the governors and directors of them chiefly aim and drive at, is, next to their private intereſt, the profit and advantage of the particular company they belong to: that ſovereigns are not ignorant of this, is manifeſt from the reſtriction made uſe of, when they grant any corporation the privilege to make laws and regulations of their own, which

is always done with a proviſo, that they ſhall enact none that are claſhing, or any ways interfere with the laws of the country, of which, if there was no danger, it would never be mentioned.

THOSE who underſtand the world, know, that there is a myſterious part in every trade and profeſſion, beneficial to thoſe only that are of it, and which moreover is abſolutely uſeleſs, if not detrimental to all the reſt of the ſociety. Therefore every ſhop-keeper has his mark, which is allowed to be a ſecret; and to enquire into it, or but ſeem deſirous of knowing it, is unmannerly and impertinent. The intrinſical value and prime coſt of things is what all ſellers endeavour with the utmoſt care to conceal from the buyers.

IF the ſpiritual power of the clergy be, in vulgar eſteem, ſomewhat greater than they are in reality poſſeſs'd of, it is an heroick piece of honeſty in a clergy-man to diſclaim it for himſelf; but if a biſhop ſhould acquaint the laity with this, and undeceive them, it is very natural to imagine, that, tho' it could do no hurt to religion it ſelf, the reſt of the clergy would

would reſent it. If we judge of others by our ſelves, we cannot think it pleaſant to any profeſſion to have their myſteries reveal'd. The poor have as much *Venice* treacle for a penny, as will make two half crown boluſſes, if a phyſician preſcribes them to an alderman: this is very true, and the divulging it cannot do the leaſt prejudice to any body's health whatever; yet no body expects to hear of it from an apothecary, and I am miſtaken if the whole company would not call any of their fraternity a falſe brother, who ſhould advertiſe it to the publick, more eſpecially if he did it after he was made a phyſician.

AND as to the credit and dignity of employments, though the followers of it have vaſtly deviated from the firſt inſtitution, yet we ſee they are ever fond of retaining, even when the thing it ſelf is gone, if not the reputation, at leaſt the name of their honourable original; as men of birth, and no merit, are proud of the titles that were given as a reward to their deſerving anceſtors. The great men of ancient *Rome* took inferiour citizens into

their favour and protection: they pleaded their cauſe before the ſenate, if they ſtood in need of it, and aſſiſted them, on all occaſions, with their advice and authority, their eloquence, and often their purſe. Thoſe who enjoy'd the benefit of ſo generous a friendſhip, were call'd clients, and the honourable name of patrons was given to thoſe noble benefactors. This cuſtom has been out of doors a great many ages, and pleading of cauſes has been a mercenary employment time out of mind, that men are brought up to for a livelihood; yet the names of patron and client are ſtill retain'd by our modern lawyers, and 'tis not only, that the learn'd council, who give advice, and plead, make uſe of them, but every little pettifogger and hanger-on of the law has the impudence to call the cuſtomers he gets his bread by, his clients.

WHY ſhould not the clergy have the ſame liberty? Why not the cardinals, in all the ſplendor of oſtenſtatious luxury; the biſhop of *Munſter* at the head of his army, or any other eccleſiaſtical prince, celebrating the carnival in maſquerade, be al-

allow'd to ſtile themſelves the ſucceſſors of the apoſtles? And why not the pope, in all his pontifical ornaments, be call'd ſucceſſor of St. *Peter*, and ſervant of ſervants, when he gives audience to the ambaſſadors, or receives in ſtate the adoration of a kneeling prince; or vicar of CHRIST, whilſt he lays claim to the ſovereignty over all the kingdoms of this world? There is no doubt but that all of them are the ſucceſſors of the apoſtles, as far as they are concern'd in the miniſtry and promulgation of the goſpel; and they will never leave boaſting of it, even if in their perſons, (which is hardly poſſible) they ſhould come ſtill to be worſe than ſome of them are now, or any have been yet.

THE captains, who divided the ſpoil of the *Macedonian* conqueſt, were the ſucceſſors of *Alexander*, though they did not inherit either his valour or magnanimity. The moſt deſpicable crafts-men have their founders upon record, if it does honour to their occupation, and never forget what once could be ſaid in praiſe of their calling. The gardener boaſts of the antiquity and innocence of his employment, and,

when tir'd, finds relief by thinking how the father of all mankind earn'd his bread. The wool-comber is proud that he can name a biſhop for the inventor of his art. And if you attack a poor ſtocking-weaver on the meanneſs of his trade, he'll interrupt his work, though half ſtarv'd, and take the pains to tell you, that he can name you a nobleman who had ſerv'd his time to the knitting frame.

THE apoſtles were the meſſengers of GOD, the clergy are the ſucceſſors, and therefore they ought to be call'd the meſſengers of GOD; but as the ſame word, which in *Greek* ſignifies meſſenger, may likewiſe be tranſlated ambaſſador, conſidering the veneration due to that character, and the dignity of their own order, moſt clergy-men are of opinion, that inſtead of meſſengers, they ſhould be ſtil'd ambaſſadors of GOD, and on all occaſions they eſteem every body to be their friend, who entertains the moſt favourable ſentiments of the honour, ſpiritual power and authority of their profeſſion. What calling is there of the laity, that would not do the ſame? Ambaſſador is a modern word,

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and not ſounding amiſs, the uſe of it may eaſily be allowed them as a piece of civility, without looking too narrowly into the real ſignification of it, or teaſing them with the conſequences that might be drawn from their pretenſions to the title.

FOR though every one loves to hear the profeſſion he belongs to well ſpoken of for his own ſake, few deſire it ſhould be to their coſt. If a man would urge the original relation between patron and client to one of our moſt eminent barriſters, it would avail but little; and ſhould he make ſuch a remonſtrance to ſave a fee, he would only be laught at for his pains. In like manner, to alledge the ſpiritual wiſdom of the apoſtles, the powerful influence of their preaching, and the many miracles they wrought as ſo many teſtimonies, that confirmed the divinity of their miſſion, and require the ſame credentials of the clergy, would be thought unreaſonable.

YET that the church of *Rome* has not wholly quitted this point, is evident from their frequent canonizations, to inſinuate, that the ſame virtue and power of the apoſtles ſtill continue among her clergy. She

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admits of no ſaints, unleſs it be known firſt, that they have wrought miracles, either before or after death. But as the proofs of them are always made among friends, and deferr'd ſo late, the worſt of it is, that they are not convincing to their adverſaries, and all the proteſtants openly proclaim them to be forgeries.

HAVING once renounc'd an expedient ſo long made uſe of by the church, the reform'd clergy has been forc'd to make ſhift without; and to ſolve all objections of that nature, they content themſelves with anſwering, that, though GOD had aſſiſted the firſt promulgation of the goſpel with miracles, and the apoſtles had, for that purpoſe, in all their tranſactions been influenc'd by his immediate power, yet after them it had not pleas'd the divine wiſdom to inſpire any of their ſucceſſors in ſo viſible a manner. It would likewiſe be thought too rigorous to expect in them the ſame holineſs that adorn'd the lives of the apoſtles, the examplary patience with which they underwent all labour and difficulties to propagate the faith, the contempt of honour and riches, their firm-

neſs in perſecution, and conſtancy in death.

THE clergy are not aſhamed before the world to indulge every appetite they are able to gratify, refuſe no conveniencies of eaſe and luxury, and ſhew the ſame fondneſs of worldly pleaſures as the laity; and no leſs uneaſineſs when they are forc'd to go without. Should they be asked, if they would practiſe no ſelf denial, nor ſhew any forbearance beyond the laity, why ſo many of them ſhould be haughty, covetous, prone to anger, and violent in their reſentments, and not a few more notoriouſly vicious; they would readily tell us, that the good things of this world were made for the uſe of man, and that the moderate enjoyment of them was by no human or divine precept denied more to the clergy than the laity; and for the reſt, that we ought to conſider, that clergy-men are made of the ſame mould, and have the ſame corrupt nature with other men; that they were born with the ſame infirmities, ſubject to the ſame paſſions, and that conſequently they were liable to the ſame temptations.

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AND if any ſhould be guilty of crying ſins, and be profligately wicked, they would aſſure us, that it was the higheſt injuſtice to charge this on the whole order. As to the ſcandal ſuch examples might occaſion, that it was only the ignorant and unthinking this could be prejudicial to, and that therefore all wiſe and conſiderate men ought for the ſake of religion it ſelf, and the good of ſociety in general, rather ſtifle and help to conceal from vulgar eyes, the frailties of the clergy, than to proclaim and expoſe them to the world; and after all, that it was the general opinion of proteſtants, as well as papiſts, that the wickedneſs of a clergy-man render'd not his miniſtry ineffectual to thoſe of the laity, who would vouchſafe to be good themſelves.

FROM all which it is manifeſt, that the clergy would inſinuate, that they may be beneficial to the ſociety, notwithſtanding they are bad men; that, whilſt they treſpaſs not againſt the laws or common decency, we ought not to find fault with their lives; and if they do, we ought

ought to connive at them the beſt we can: we are in the wrong therefore to look for more intrinſick worth, virtue, or ſelf-denial in the clergy, than we expect to find in the laity. It is an error likewiſe to imagine, that the impoſition of hands, or any other ceremony, adds holineſs to a clergy-man, or renders the invocation of the Holy Ghoſt effectual on a wicked prieſt. This is aſcribing greater virtue and efficacy to rites and ceremonies, than we really find in the very ſacraments of CHRIST, which are often adminiſtred to ſuch as prove the greateſt profligates; or elſe how could men be perjur'd, or commit adultery, who have been partakers of the Lord's-ſupper, and turn houſe-breakers and murderers after they had been baptized?

S T. *Cyprian*, it is true, in his letter to *Pupianus*, affirms with warmth, that [a] to ſuſpect a prieſt to be polluted, is to judge GOD, and to call in queſtion the teſtimony of CHRIST who ordain'd him: but I muſt beg this father's leave to diſſent

[a] Cyprian Epiſt. 66.

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from him in this opinion; for whatever excellency the clergy receive from ordination, experience teaches men, that it does not preſerve them always from committing the worſt of crimes; they are not leſs covetous, neither do they envy or backbite leſs, and they hate worſe than the laity. The monks and friars are remarkable for their lewdneſs, and the biſhops of *Rome* have been noted for their luxury [a] ſo long ago, that *Ammianus Marcellinus* has upbraided them with it in his [b] time. Many clergy-men have been drunkards, and for their cruelty, where it has been in their power to exerciſe it, theirs has been more remarkable than any other profeſſion.

In the days of St. *Lewis*, when the clergy had the power of life and death over their vaſſals, the chapter of *Paris* put all the inhabitants of *Chatenay* in priſon, where, wanting the neceſſaries of life, they were [c] in danger to be ſtarv'd to

[a] Ammian. Marcell. Hiſtor. Rom. *lib.* 27.
[b] *The Fourth Century.*
[c] Joinville Hiſt, de St. Louis. *liv.* 10.

death;

death; and ſeveral actually dy'd either with famine or by the inconveniencies they ſuffer'd by heat in a place hardly able to contain them. It is incredible what the Moors, Jews, and Pagans, have ſuffer'd from the *Roman* clergy in *Spain*, *Portugal*, and *America*; to ſay nothing of the aſſaſſinations, private murders, and more private maſſacres they have been guilty of, under pretence of promoting orthodoxy, againſt the humble and credulous chriſtian laity.

In ripping up all theſe faults, I have no other deſign than to convince the reader, that the clergy are men, as others are, neither better nor worſe than the laity; and that it is only fear and ſuperſtition, which for reaſons above [a] mentioned, make the vulgar have a greater opinion of their ſanctity, and rely on their influence in heaven, and ſpiritual power with more confidence than they deſerve. This over-rating of the perſonal worth of the clergy, is the occaſion of a double evil: on the one hand it makes

[a] Pag. 21. 133. 143.

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the laity have greater expectations of them, than they are either willing or able to anſwer, and on the other it prompts the clergy, at the expence of the publick tranquillity, to ſeek their own private ends with greater licentiouſneſs, than is allow'd of to any other calling.

THERE is no ſubject among the laity ſo great, that ſubmiſſion and obedience is not required of him to the laws and the ſupreme power; becauſe we don't think any ſo virtuous or honeſt, but that ambition, avarice, or ſome other paſſion may induce him to prefer his own private advantage to that of the publick without juſtice or moderation. Both reaſon and experience teach us that we ought not to judge more favourably of the clergy. And yet their fair out-ſide and plauſible pretences impoſe upon, and hinder us from rightly diſtinguiſhing between that part of their function, which conſiſts in being ſerviceable to us in attaining eternal happineſs, and that part of it, which they employ for their temporal intereſt, which diſtinction is yet very neceſſary; for if myſti-

myſtically they are the ſucceſſors of the apoſtles as to the firſt; they are more viſibly the ſucceſſors of the jewiſh and heathen prieſts, in regard of the latter. There is no ſhape or colour of dreſs, no mien, nor outward modeſty that is indued with any holineſs. A grave look often hides a voluptuous heart, and a man may be as wicked with a ſtarch behaviour, and an auſtere crabbed countenance, as he can with the moſt rakiſh air.

VIRTUE is ſcarce every where, and a well-bred man may as much want real probity, as the greateſt clown. Porters and carmen are reckon'd the rudeſt and moſt uncivilis'd part of the nation; the reverſe of them, and moſt polite part are the courtiers; yet I don't think, that there is more religion in a hundred of the one, than there is in the ſame number of the other. I am far from thinking, that the laity are better than the clergy, yet the one ought to be as dependent on the government as the other, and neither of them have any privilege or immunity to be miſchievous to the whole. All lawful employments are alike as to juſtice and ho-

neſty, and if in any calling, men are worſe, for the generality, than they are in others, it is only, becauſe they have a greater opportunity of being ſo with impunity. Pride and ambition are ſo riveted in our nature, that there is no profeſſion, nor no ſet of men, but what would lord it, and tyrannize over all the reſt, if they could.

THE reaſon why we ought to apprehend the encroachments of the clergy more than of any other profeſſion, is, becauſe they have greater opportunities, and are leſs miſtruſted. When a man has the power to harangue the multitude at his pleaſure, where it is criminal to interrupt him, it is dangerous that he ſhould have likewiſe the liberty of ſaying to them what he pleaſes, without being liable to be call'd to an account for what he ſays. Lawyers and phyſicians often prove great burdens to a family; but then phyſicians are never ſent for, but when we are ill; and whilſt GOD gives us health, we have nothing to do with them. Lawyers likewiſe are only made uſe of on occaſion, and many live happily to a great age without ever employing any. But whether we

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are ſick or well, live in peace or diſcord, the intercourſe between the clergy and the laity is continual. For, beſides their officiating every day at divine ſervice, we can do nothing of moment without them, and they aſſiſt us through every ſtage of life. As ſoon as we are born they come to chriſten us, and when the nurſe has had the greateſt trouble with us, and we can help our ſelves, the clergy deſire to have the tuition of us, till we are men. The next thing then to be thought on is matrimony, which we can't enter upon without them. In ſickneſs they come to comfort us, and claim a right to examine our conſciences when we are in health. They ſtill viſit us on our death-beds, even when the phyſician has left us; and, after we have taken our leaves of them and the whole world, they won't yet part with us before they have ſeen us in the grave.

When all theſe things are taken into due conſideration, the clergy carefully reſtrain'd from doing miſchief to the ſociety, and the publick every way guarded againſt them, as if they were the worſt of

men, I would not have them debarr'd from the comforts of life, and they ſhould enjoy the world equally with the laity. But that no impartial man may have the leaſt reaſon, any longer to ſuſpect my ſincerity, and to ſhew my ſentiments in relation of the reciprocal duties I treat of, without being dogmatical, I ſhall explain my meaning in the following example.

I don't think it eaſy to name a great city better govern'd than that of *Amſterdam*. (I beg, no prejudice againſt the name.) The behaviour there, between the national clergy and the laity, towards each other is very commendable. In the ſalary of the miniſters there is a perfect equality; they have about two hundred pounds ſterling yearly each, which, without their asking for, is ſent home to them by quarterly payments in a handſome manner: beſides this the *Eaſt India* company make them a preſent every year of ſpices. There is hardly a miniſter, who has not ſome intimacy with two, three, or more families of the ſenators, where he is always welcome, and treated with the ſame deference, they pay to one another; on all

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ſolemn entertainments, this clergy-man graces their table, and ſhares with them in moſt of their diverſions, and what elegant comforts of life a friend can enjoy that does not live always under the ſame roof.

THE multitude pay them great reſpect, and it is counted brutiſh among the common people, not to pull off their hat to a miniſter, which is often done even by thoſe, who are not of the publick church, and is the more remarkable in a country, where the vulgar are more fam'd for ſelf-intereſt than civility. To be a miniſter of the publick church at *Amſterdam* is the higheſt poſt in presbytery, a *Dutch* divine can arrive at, and reckon'd ſo conſiderable, that, tho' he has not a groat, if he marries a fortune of eight or ten thouſand pounds ſterling, it is counted an equal match: their widows have handſom penſions paid them, whilſt they remain ſingle; and their children have moſt of the offices and places of profit beſtow'd upon them, that are in the gift of the magiſtrate, at leaſt with equal merit they are generally preferr'd to all others.

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WHAT is expected from the clergy for this, is a grave deportment, and the ſolemn exerciſe of their function; by no means to meddle with ſtate affairs, and with all their faculties endeavour to appear hearty for the government, and the publick welfare. They are, whilſt in health, obliged to preach twice a week, tho' their ſermons commonly laſt an hour and an half in the delivery, and often longer. Conſidering how large the churches, and numerous the audiences are, preaching is a painful office, and would be almoſt inſupportable, if the pleaſure of being followed by ſuch vaſt multitudes did not help, by gratifying human frailty, to alleviate the burden. They are allowed to inveigh againſt ſin and the vices of great men, as much as they pleaſe, without pointing at particular perſons. Tavern, or coffee-houſe, they never enter into; which, how much it contributes to the veneration the vulgar has for them, no clergy can know but what has try'd it.

NOT to be tedious, I have omitted ſeveral tokens of eſteem and friendſhip, which at the birth of children, and other

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times they receive; but one of them is too remarkable not to be mention'd. At publick rejoicings, when bonfires are made for peace or victory, the magistrate sends in to every minister a handsome quantity of wine, and in the evening a certain number of pitch-barrels, fill'd with other combustibles, is at the publick charge rais'd before their doors on a scaffold, and burnt, in the same manner as is done before the houses of officers of note, and the magistrates themselves. From this the people have the pleasure to think, that the government has as great a reliance on the prayers and piety of their clergy, as they have on the conduct and bravery of their commanders, and that the clergy participate in the publick joy, and have no wishes that are different from the common good.

THEY are *Calvinists*, and consequently presbyterians, that are all equal without pre-eminence or subordination. I have already declar'd for episcopacy in the third chapter, and shall say no more on that head. What I would observe relates to the harmony between the clergy and the laity,

laity, and their reciprocal behaviour to each other, and I would recommend it no farther, than as it might concern our inferiour clergy, and interferes not with our conſtitution, or church government as eſtabliſhed by law. As to the biſhops, I would have all that reſpect and deference paid them, which is due to them as the firſt members of the honourable houſe they ſit in: but their place there, and the ſhare they have in the legiſlature, belong to them not as clergy-men, but as lords of parliament, by the law of the land, and not by proviſion of the goſpel. The biſhopricks themſelves I look upon as places of honour and profit, to reward clergymen of merit and capacity. Their number is very moderate, and therefore the expence not half ſo burdenſome to a nation as ours, as they are ſerviceable to the encouragement of learning.

PREACHING at *Amſterdam* muſt be a labour, which every body is not robuſt enough to undergo; but if we abate ſomewhat of the fatigue in that part of their function, for the reſt I think miniſters of the goſpel ought to be ſatisfy'd with ſuch

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uſage, as I have mention'd. If not, it is manifeſt, that they are unreaſonably ſollicitous, either to enjoy their eaſe and pleaſure in general, or elſe to gratify ſome predominant paſſion. And when we ſee, that they have no regard for our eternal welfare, the main part of their function, all their arguments for power ought to be ſuſpected: for the more narrowly we examine into their ſpecious pretences, the more we ſhall find, that all tend to promote their own perſonal greatneſs, and temporal advantage, and that they only ſtrive to have the whip-hand of the laity, to be their own judges, and wholly independent on all rule and government, but their own.

RELIGION requires no ſuch thing. Eccleſiaſtick cenſures are perpetual torments to the laity: the chief uſe they are of, beſides puffing up the prieſts with pride, is for envious and malicious people, when they want a handle to be vexatious to their neighbours, and it ſeldom happens, that courts of judicature, where clergy-men preſide, are not ſad grievances to a nation, let their religion or church

government be what it will. That presbytery is not eligible before epiſcopacy, we may learn from the uſe the clergy of *Geneva*, and the kirk of *Scotland*, have all along made of their juriſdiction. Such a power muſt make all clergy-men tyrants, and would do the ſame to all profeſſions, or any other ſet of men, inveſted with the like independent authority the clergy claim; and I would as ſoon truſt the inquiſition of *Spain* for lenity and diſcretion in puniſhing, as I would the rulers of the independents in *America*, if not ſooner; for the more men are obliged to keep up a pretence to virtue and religion, true or falſe, the leſs fit they are to judge others. The reaſon is plain: hypocrites are under greater temptation to be cruel, than other ſinners; becauſe they are always in hopes that we ſhall judge (as many are fools enough to do) of the holineſs and purity of their hearts from the hatred and ſtrong averſion they outwardly expreſs againſt vice, which muſt make them unmercifully ſevere againſt the leaſt frailties of others.

THE civil magiſtrates ought never to part with their faſces to any function or profeſſion whatever, but keep in their own hands the ſole power of puniſhing offences, be the crime what it will. We don't live in ſuch days of ignorance, that none but clergy-men can read: a government that is able to detect the intricate machinations of plotting ſtateſmen, ought to be deem'd wiſe enough to know what is blaſphemy or prophaneneſs, without asking a prieſt; and where immorality is diſcountenanced, and vice puniſh'd by wholeſome laws, religion will never ſuffer for want of power, or any worldly greatneſs in the clergy. If they will think otherwiſe, let them; but if they complain of it by way of appeal to the multitude, they ought to be immediately ſtopt. When men offend by ſpeaking, the firſt and mildeſt puniſhment they can expect, is to be ſilenc'd, which, if others will not take warning by, they ought to be more ſeverely treated.

WHEN once it is manifeſt, that they only labour for their own worldly ends, we ought to be very cautious how and

where to believe them. They'll tell us, that without having the liberty to preach what they pleaſe, they cannot diſcharge their conſciences, nor perform their duty; they'll give us the examples of *Samuel*, of *Nathan*, and other prophets, and inſtance the noble freedom and becoming boldneſs with which they ſcrupled not to reprimand kings themſelves. They will add, that the clergy ſpeak on the part of GOD, as well as the prophets did, that they are the ambaſſadors of heaven, and that as ſuch they ought not to be limited or controul'd by any power upon earth.

THESE are ſpecious pleas; but before we are ſway'd by them, we ought to examine into the lives and actions of the clergy; and if we find that the greateſt part of them are very neglectful in every branch of their duty, that has any relation to the good of others; that there is not the leaſt reſemblance between the functions or perſons of the chriſtian clergy, and the prophets of the Old Teſtament, that there is no ſymptom about them to make us imagine, that they are inſpired by the

Holy Ghoſt, as they all were, whom they inſtance in, as having ſpoke to kings from GOD; and laſtly, that moſt of them are wholly taken up with worldly cares, and mind themſelves, their eaſe, their pleaſure, and earthly comforts more, ten to one, than the cauſe of GOD or religion. If we find, I ſay, theſe things, we ought to be deaf to the moſt plauſible of their pretenſions, and take care of our ſelves in defiance of all their deceitful eloquence.

As to their being the ambaſſadors of GOD, I have ſpoke of it already, and therefore, if they will compliment themſelves with the title, without laying any ſtreſs on the ſignification of the word, they may, but they muſt draw no conſequences from it: rhetoricians may have leave to uſe figurative ways of ſpeaking, that in the ſtrict ſenſe are not to be allow'd of. But how little the clergy reſemble either the apoſtles of Chriſt, or earthly ambaſſadors, may be eaſily ſhewn, without upbraiding them with their want of credentials. The apoſtles were viſibly choſen by our Saviour himſelf; the clergy are brought

up to their function for a livelihood: they diſclaim'd all earthly power; theſe are always graſping at it, and never more uneaſy, than when they are reſtrain'd from the uſe of it: in ſhort, the apoſtles voluntarily renounc'd the world; and the greateſt complaint of the clergy is, that they can't have enough of it.

As to earthly ambaſſadors, they are only ſent to ſovereigns that are altogether independent on him who ſends them. What relation this has to the Creator of the univerſe and his creatures, whoſe very breathing depends on his preſerving power, I can't well conceive. This is certain, princes ſend no ambaſſadors to their ſubjects, but when they want power; and therefore, if the clergy will fancy themſelves ambaſſadors to us from above, they muſt aſcribe to the ſole monarch of heaven and earth, who is jealous of his glory and ſovereignty to the higheſt degree, what would be counted an unheard of and ſhameful condeſcenſion in a mortal and earthly king: a mean ill-adviſ'd conduct, that would infallibly tend to the diſhonour of the moſt limited, and moſt precarious world-

worldly prince. If every thing is blaſphemy, which detracts from the wiſdom and glory of GOD, what muſt we ſay of their pretenſions?

BUT to return to the ſubject of preaching, I conjure all civil magiſtrates to believe, that nothing is more deſtructive to the peace of the ſociety, or more dangerous to the publick welfare in general, than to let the clamours and audaciouſneſs of malecontent clergy-men go unpuniſhed when they become criminal, and tamely to ſuffer that men, who, by their function, ought to ſtand by and ſtrengthen the authority of the government in every thing that is not claſhing with the laws of GOD, or their country, ſhould openly traduce, and endeavour to render it odious to the people.

BUT as for want of ſufficient proof it is not always in the power of the magiſtrate to convince clergy-men of crimes, which they have been actually guilty of, the laity ought ever to be upon their guard againſt preachers when they know them to be diſpleas'd. When a government appears reſolute in oppoſing the leaſt ten-

dencies to ſedition and civil diſcord, the diſcontented clergy learn to be angry with diſcretion, to make uſe of ſly inſinuations, and vent to their audiences in couch'd expreſſions what in words at length for fear of condign puniſhment they dare not utter. In ſuch conjectures every good ſubject ought to beware himſelf, and uſe all his endeavours to caution others, his family, his friends, his neighbours, and every body he has any influence over, how they give ear to ſuch preaching.

To render ſermons not unprofitable to us, it is a chriſtian's duty in going to church to baniſh, as much as he is able, from his heart all envy, jealouſy and revenge, that he may at laſt carry a diſpoſition capable of receiving the doctrine of peace. Would men comply with this, they might be furniſhed with a certain rule, by which the meaneſt capacities would be able to judge of the integrity of their teachers, and have an infallible touchſtone to know, whether they endeavour'd to eſtabliſh ſentiments of union and concord among their hearers, or by

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ſowing the ſeeds of contention, ſpur them on to hatred and indignation againſt any of their neighbours. Where that care I recommend has been taken, let every perſon re-examine himſelf after ſermon, and if he finds all calm within, and his mind not more diſturb'd with anger, averſion or other ſymptoms of animoſity, againſt thoſe of different opinions, or againſt his ſuperiours, in going out than it was at coming into the church, the miniſter has acted the good ſhepherd, and done honeſtly by his flock, and we may be ſatisfy'd that his diſcourſe was not deſign'd to deſtroy or endanger the publick repoſe: but if after the ſame precaution, you feel in your boſom ſome rancour or ill-will, either againſt the government, or any of the miniſtry, or againſt others whom you diſagree with. If you feel a deſire of revenge, and your charity to any ſort of men is ſenſibly decay'd, you may immediately, unleſs there is another viſible cauſe of your change, lay the fault on your miniſter. 'Tis he who has ſeduc'd you from CHRIST, and you may aſſure your ſelf, that, to gratify ſome paſſion,

or

or ſerve ſome other worldly end, he has endeavour'd to diſturb the tranquillity of the people.

THERE are a thouſand artful ways, by which ſubtle orators may prepoſſeſs men, raiſe their pity, anger, jealouſy, or any paſſion they have a mind to, without ſpeaking plain, more eſpecially divines, who have ſo large a field as the ſcriptures to range in, from whence they may cull innumerable paſſages, to be wreſted and turn'd to what purpoſe they pleaſe. With ſuch a help, and a very little skill, a preacher may infuſe any ſtrange notions into a vulgar audience, and either ſet them on to, or deter them from things without naming them, or openly telling his hearers what he means, or what he would be at.

MANY things in the Old Teſtament were only ſpoke to the Jews, and could never relate to any other nation: many predictions, as thoſe which foretold the deſtruction of the city and temple of *Jeruſalem*, have been fulfill'd a great many ages ago. The ſame muſt be ſaid of every thing which has been propheſy'd concerning

cerning the coming of the Meſſiah, and whatever related to particular captivities and other calamities, which the Jews actually ſuffer'd long before chriſtianity; yet there's not a country in chriſtendom where all things are not daily applied to the then preſent circumſtances of the people, or made ſubſervient (often very injudiciouſly) to every end the miniſter has in view, and what is a greater wonder, is, that by common conſent this is call'd preaching of the goſpel.

I don't ſay this to find fault with it, to deprive the miniſters of the Old Teſtament, or abridge their liberty of chuſing their texts from any part of it as they pleaſe, but to demonſtrate the neceſſity and reaſonableneſs of a caution I am going to give, and which I would have all men make uſe of in hearing ſermons. An allegorical expreſſion often engages, and at once byaſſes the hearers in favour of the preacher. How wonderfully is an audience often moved with the exclamation of a prophet, or a few words of a pſalm emphatically delivered, when at the ſame time ſhould the context be minded,

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and all circumſtances examin'd into, they would be found very impertinently apply'd. If men will ſuffer themſelves to be drawn away by ſuch random flights, their allegiance is always precarious, and they'll be perverted before they are aware, that the preacher has any deſign againſt the concord of the ſociety.

In all profeſſions men ought to do good, or at leaſt to endeavour it; and he is far from having diſcharg'd his duty, who can but barely ſay, that he has done no miſchief. A man who is entruſted with the cure of ſouls, ought to examine into their frailties and ſpiritual ailments, to adminiſter proper remedies accordingly. When a miniſter preaches to an incited rabble, it is not ſufficient not to encreaſe their fury; it is his duty to appeaſe them, and turn their hearts from the miſchief, they are bent on, to the utmoſt his abilities will let him. To act prudently with a mad-man, we ought not ſo much as to mention the thing that diſtracts him. It is very ſurprizing, that men of ſenſe ſhould ſo often treſpaſs againſt ſo plain a maxim, and (though as often admoniſhed) ſtill pre-

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tend ignorance in the flagrancy of their guilt.

In many caſes it is difficult openly to convince men of their crimes, as long as it is poſſible for them to conceal, or but deny their evil intentions, and they often elude the force of a juſt accuſation by evaſions, which their conſciences muſt upbraid them with. To exhort an audience to orthodoxy is laudable in a clergy-man; and to bid them beware of ſchiſm, and ſtand up for the church, may likewiſe bear a very good conſtruction; but if it makes the mob pull down a meeting-houſe in *England*, or abuſe men for having common-prayer books in *Scotland*, or commit ſome other outrage, would not a miniſter of the goſpel, if he was not pleas'd with it, on the firſt opportunity undeceive his miſtaken followers, reprove them, and in the moſt ſerious manner remonſtrate to them, that they had miſconſtrued his meaning? but if he takes notice of it, and goes on in the ſame ſtrain againſt the ſin of ſchiſm; if moreover his pleaſant looks and a ſignificant ſmile now and then caſt on the ring-leaders by ſtealth, beſpeak his

his ſatisfaction, and far from reproving them, with unuſual civilities he ſeems to reward their zeal; then what muſt we think of ſuch a miniſter, or what can he ſay for himſelf? I ſhould be glad to know what evaſions he can have left, when thus far purſued.

I have hinted before at a conqueſt gain'd by the church over the ſtate at *Geneva*. This victory was obtain'd by a ſermon of [a] *Calvin*, which, to all outward appearance, was

[a] *The Council of* Two Hundred *had made a Decree, that the final Judgment of the Cauſes of Excommunication ſhould belong to the Senate, and that the Senate might abſolve the Excommunicated, as they ſhould think fit.* One Bertelier, *who had been excommunicated eighteen months before, ſued to the Senate to be abſolved. This* Calvin *ſtrenuouſly oppoſed; but the Senate were for re-admitting him to the Communion, and by virtue of the Decree above-mention'd, the Senate granted Letters of Abſolution to* Bertelier. *The Sacrament was to be adminiſtred to him within two Days. When* Calvin *came to hear what had paſs'd, he ſoon reſolv'd what he ſhould do, and preach'd againſt the Contempt of the Sacrament; he rais'd his voice, lifted up his Hands, and ſaid, That he would imitate* St. Chryſoſtome, *That he would not oppoſe Force to Force, but he would rather ſuffer himſelf to be maſſacred, than that*

was full of zeal and piety, but in reality threatning the magiſtrate with an inſurrection, if they would not let *Calvin* have his will. The government took the hint, apprehended the danger, and the clergy gain'd their point.

To raiſe rebellion is a capital crime in any ſubject, but that a clergy-man ſhould prompt others to it, aggravates the offence: from the opportunities he has by his function, it is ſuppoſed to be always in his power, which, beſides the treaſon, makes him guilty of a breach of truſt, in perverting the deſign of his calling, to what is the leaſt ſuſpected: It is the ſame as poyſoning in an apothecary, or cutting a man's throat in a barber. The laws therefore againſt ſeditious preaching ought to be more ſevere and extenſive than they are in moſt countries. For though many of the clergy are reſolute and audacious, yet great numbers contain themſelves within the limits of ſmall innuendos and remote ſug-

that his Hands ſhould preſent the Holy Myſteries to thoſe that had been judg'd unworthy of them. Beza in vita Calvin, ad ann. 1553.

geſtions,

geſtions, who, were they not aw'd by the fear of puniſhment, would openly vent their malice, ſtick at no calumny, no bare-fac'd treaſon, and make their pulpits, that ſhould be the promptuaries of wholſome counſel, and ſpiritual comfort, like the deceitful [a] veſſels of *Hannibal*, yield nothing but poyſon and deſtruction to ſubvert a government they diſlike.

I might urge this argument with ſtill greater warmth, without contradicting what I have advanced concerning the ſuperiority and pre-eminence of their profeſſion; for nothing is more falſe, than that to bring a clergy-man to ſhame is an affront to his cloth. As they won't allow, that the moſt heinous crimes committed by a clergyman can caſt the leaſt ſcandal on his calling, ſo I can't ſee why puniſhing him as he deſerves, ſhould be counted an ignominy done to his whole or-

[a] *The* Romans *being Maſters at Sea, took all the* Carthaginian *Ships that came in their Way, which made* Hannibal *ſend out ſome ſmall veſſels on purpoſe to be taken, as accordingly they were; but being carried home, they were found only freighted with Pits full of Serpents and Adders, and other poyſonous Vermin.* Plutarch.

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der. When a peer is put to death by the baſe hands of an executioner for a crime he was convicted of, no body looks upon it as an indignity offer'd to the honourable houſe of lords.

ONCE more I inſiſt upon it, that to deſtroy the power and authority uſurped by the clergy for their temporal intereſt, and puniſh them, when they deſerve it, equal with other men, are not incompatible with the ſincere reſpect and higheſt veneration that are owing to their holy function. There is no profeſſion ſo uſeful nor ſo neceſſary to the ſociety as theirs; yet thoſe who are of it owe as much obedience and ſubmiſſion to the laws and the civil magiſtrates, as mountebanks or ſtage-players. They are like fire and water, to be both valu'd and reſtrain'd, the beſt of ſervants but worſt of maſters; and I could heartily wiſh, that all governments would treat the clergy, as, not to be wanting in either prudence or gratitude, I would a phyſician, who had ſaved my life. I would heap on him all the kindneſſes in my power, and on all occaſions he ſhould command my friendſhip. I would not only believe, but obey

every thing he ſhould adviſe, relating to my health; but ſhould he encroach on my goodneſs, I would ſhew him his error in the mildeſt manner, and ſhould I do this in vain, I would have patience, and forbear falling out with him for a great while; but if after all I found he was incorrigible, and that nothing would ſerve him but that he would have the government of my family, I would indulge him no longer, and at all events make him know I was reſolv'd to be maſter at home.

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

Of GOVERNMENT.

MANKIND agree in nothing more unanimously, than the neceſſity there is of government in the civil ſociety; but to this day it is undecided what ſort of government is the beſt. This is certain, that there is no form of government, but what has its peculiar grievances and corruptions, which others are not ſo liable to, and conſequently in every one of them ſome inconveniencies are avoided, either wholly or in part, that are more particularly or more eminently complained of in others. The ſimple unmixed governments are monarchy, ariſtocracy, and democracy. The ſupreme and legiſlative power of *Great Britain* is a compound of theſe three. I have often heard well-meaning people ſay, that

would every body be honeſt, ours is the beſt conſtitution in the world. But this is no encomium: where every body will be honeſt, and do their duty, all governments are good alike. That is the beſt conſtitution which provides againſt the worſt contingencies, that is armed againſt knavery, treachery, deceit, and all the wicked wiles of human cunning, and preſerves it ſelf firm, and remains unſhaken, though moſt men ſhould prove knaves. It is with a national conſtitution, as it is with that of mens bodies; that which can bear moſt fatigues without being diſorder'd, and laſt the longeſt in health, is the beſt.

ALL ſubjects owe an unlimited obedience to the ſupreme power in all kingdoms, ſtates and principalities whatever, and no form of government can ſubſiſt without an arbitrary ſovereignty. In any of the three ſimple forms there is no queſtion where this total ſubjection and unlimited obedience is due; but in mix'd governments it often is the cauſe of fatal quarrels, as has manifeſtly appear'd in this kingdom, where moſt calamities that have be-

befallen either king or people, have been owing to this grand diſpute. The flatterers of princes, among whom clergy-men never have been wanting, have ever aſſerted, that it was a ſin to GOD not to pay it to the king. They maintain their argument with proofs from ſcripture, the hiſtory of all ages, and all the examples of abſolute monarchs, without taking the leaſt notice of the conſtitution, and the agreement between the king and the people.

As there was nothing ſo fit to convey this doctrine among the people, and make it ſpread, as the pulpit, princes, who had the misfortune of employing miniſters that advis'd them to arbitrary ſway, have made uſe of clergy-men to preach it. In the beginning of the laſt century this doctrine had greater ſtreſs laid upon it than ever had been before, and met with no great oppoſition at firſt; but a little after, as ſoon as ſome untoward trials were made to put it into practice, half the nation roſe up againſt it, and oppos'd this tenet with ſo much violence, that it produc'd the moſt fatal contentions. Both parties

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were obſtinate, and became daily more implacable to each other from the ill offices of divines, the intemperate zeal of preachers on both ſides, and the vindictive ſpirit that reigned among them. As ſoon as the aſſertors of the paſſive doctrine loſt ground, ambitious men took advantage of the opportunity, and carried their followers to another extreme, who joining force to argument, maintained, that obedience was only due to the people, and even the king's perſon accountable for the crimes of others, if committed by his order.

THE aſſertors of liberty turn'd the oppreſſors of it, till monarchy was happily re-eſtabliſh'd almoſt by common conſent, and the doctrine of *Reſiſtance* became odious in its turn, which it had not been long, before the greateſt part of the nation thought fit to make uſe of it again. Notwithſtanding the various turns of fate theſe two doctrines have undergone, and the many miſchiefs the diſpute has occaſion'd, the queſtion remains ſtill; and as each party pretends to have the better of the argument, the quarrel is undecided.

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It would be endleſs to repeat a quarter part of what has been ſaid on this ſubject. I ſhall attempt no ſuch thing, but whoever will examine all will find, that the great difficulty of determining this affair, proceeds from the difference between the parties in ſtating the caſe rightly; for when that is fairly propos'd, I can't help thinking, but that the diſpute muſt ſoon be at an end.

It is agreed on all hands, that an unlimited obedience is due, the queſtion is, to whom? To the higheſt, the ſupreme power, that is inveſted with the abſolute ſovereignty of the nation. If we agree, likewiſe in this, as I think we do, the matter is decided, as ſoon as this power is found out. This abſolute ſovereignty of our nation is either lodg'd in one perſon, or in more than one; if in one we have nothing to mind but the arbitrary will and pleaſure of that one perſon, and the words parliament, fundamental laws and conſtitution, are empty ſounds without any ſignification; but if the ſovereignty be really divided into ſeveral branches, and the ultimate and legiſlative power is

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poſſeſs'd by the conſtitution, in which that power is founded, the king, lords and commons, then our unlimited obedience is only due to ſuch commands, as ſhall appear to have been given by their joint agreement, without being revok'd and made void by the ſame authority.

AND here it is to be obſerv'd, that as the power to make laws muſt include likewiſe a power to preſerve them from being violated with impunity, ſo every branch of the legiſlature muſt have as great a ſhare in the one, as it is inveſted with of the other. For when the commons in parliament are aſſembled to act their part in the legiſlature, and by their authority give ſanction to what they ſhall think neceſſary, or uſeful, the repreſentatives of the people are come on a very fooliſh errand, if there is another power upon earth, that without their conſent can make void, and with impunity annul, perhaps the next day, what they have been enacting with ſo much ſolemnity, and after ſo mature a deliberation.

TO exert the power, which comes to their ſhare in making laws, the lords and com-

commons muſt be lawfully call'd and aſſembled in their reſpective houſes: but whether they are ſitting or not, the power of enforcing and preſerving the validity of the laws is entruſted to the king; by this confidence the nobles and people repoſe in their monarch, he becomes the guardian and ſuperintendant of the laws, whoſe ſacred office it is not only to require obedience to them of all his ſubjects, without partiality, but likewiſe to promote, and every way encourage the execution of them, and lend his authority to thoſe who are employ'd in it. The king at his coronation takes an oath to diſcharge this truſt; which, whilſt he does, he repreſents the whole ſovereignty of the nation, and the ſame obedience is to be paid to him, which is due to all the three eſtates.

FROM what has been ſaid it is evident, that the chief end, why the king is inveſted with this power, is to enable him to maintain the laws; and ſince the king has no prerogative but what is given by law, it is impoſſible, he ſhould have a power, without his parliament, to make,

repeal, or alter any; and nothing is more abſurd than to advance, that a perſon has a juſt authority to deſtroy what he has ſworn to keep. But to render it ſtill more manifeſt, that the king has no power to claim obedience, and that it is not ſo much as ſurmis'd, he ſhould require it of his ſubjects to any command that is unlawful, we are but to obſerve what every body knows, that all perſons are accountable for their own actions, and that no order of the king, how plain or expreſs ſoever, tho' produced in writing, and corroborated with his ſign manual, can extenuate a man's guilt, much leſs exempt him from it, if in executing that order he has acted againſt the law. Nay the king has no power to claim obedience to any command, that is not founded in law, that is, where there is not ſome law that requires obedience to it. If the king commands me to give him my eſtate, if I think fit to comply and give it him, I break no law; the act I do is not unlawful; but I am not bound to do it, neither in law nor in conſcience; becauſe there is no law that gives him authority to require it.

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In times of danger, if the ſafety of the nation requires, that the executive power ſhould be encreaſed, the people may enlarge the truſt they repoſe in the king, by laying aſide for a while the great buckler of their liberty, the *Habeas Corpus* act. But this is never done, but when conſpiracies and rebellion are actually on foot, and the parliament is perfectly well aſſured of the good intention of the king and miniſtry. Even in the heighth of this confidence it is very viſible, that this truſt is limited, the power of arbitrary confinements is never given to the king; all that is done by ſo laying aſide the *Habeas Corpus* act, is only ſuſpending for a few months ſome privileges given to the ſubjects by that act; and if there be any further occaſion to continue ſuch ſuſpenſion, the people again muſt be conſulted; the neceſſity there is for continuing this confidence in the king, is to be examin'd and diſcuſs'd in parliament; or elſe at the ſtated period, as ſoon as the time is expir'd, the act reaſſumes its force, whether the parliament be prorogued, diſſolv'd or actually ſitting; which ſhews, that this is an

affair look'd upon to be of that high importance, that no perſon or power upon earth ſhall judge of it but themſelves: and conſequently that a very conſiderable part of the ſovereignty remains virtually in the people, even when they have no repreſentatives, and have actually entruſted the executive power beyond the uſual limits; and at the ſame time it demonſtrates, that the law is a rule that binds the king equally with his ſubjects.

WHAT is moſt beautiful in our conſtitution is, that theſe three eſtates, ſingly inveſted with ſo great a ſhare of ſovereignty, can never interfere with each others power, whilſt the laws are held ſacred by all the three equally. All the ſhares of ſovereignty poſſeſs'd by the lords and commons notwithſtanding, the ſame honours and reſpect are due to the king, that are uſually paid to abſolute monarchs, as much as if the legiſlature and ſupreme power was not divided. He likewiſe makes biſhops, is the fountain of honour, and has the ſole power to beſtow titles and dignities. He names all officers both civil and military, and the coin bears his effigy.

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He makes peace and war, leagues and alliances with foreign princes; and the political administration, and management of foreign affairs, and the interest of the nation, in respect to other states and potentates, are likewise his province. As to the government of his subjects he has, as I have hinted before, the superintendancy over all the laws to render them effectual, and justice is administred in his name.

THESE high prerogatives and undoubted marks of sovereignty, belong to the king, and many more, but he has not one that can make him a tyrant, or his subjects slaves. The rights and privileges of parliament, and the liberty and property of the people are as sacred branches of the constitution as any thing the king can claim. If a subject offends, it is the law, and not the arbitrary will of the prince, or any of his ministers, he is to be punished by. He that is refractory against the law, is in many cases as rigorously dealt with, as if he had disobey'd the most arbitrary tyrant; but where there is no law, there is no transgression. As the greatest respect is due to our monarchs,

they ought to be treated with the height of good manners, and the people may aſſert their liberty without making uſe of odious terms: and they can want no coercive power over their kings, becauſe their name or authority is no ſhelter to a man who acts illegally.

If a man comes without any force to demand money of me in the king's name contrary to the law, or without law, I laugh at him, and ſend him about his buſineſs; but if he came with a troop of horſe, or any other ſuperiour force, I would comply, not, becauſe he came in the king's name, but becauſe he would be ſtronger than I. But when he has done this, the law is on my ſide, I can call him to an account for it, and the king's order ſkreens him no more from the law, than an order of the great turk, or the mayor of the leaſt corporation in *England*. But if, refuſing to part with my money, I am impriſon'd, without admitting me to bail, if ſufficient, and proffer'd, and am deny'd a lawful tryal, or that I am tried by an illegal court of judicature, erected at the king's pleaſure, then the rights and liberty

ty of the ſubjects are invaded, and in the firſt caſe the act of *Habeas Corpus* is violated. All this may be done, and the king not in fault himſelf: he may be wholly ignorant of ſuch facts, or be miſinform'd, and ſome of his miniſters abuſe his authority, and they may be proſecuted and puniſhed, and compell'd by law to make me ſatisfaction.

BUT if after many remonſtrances made to the king, or his council, the injuries are not redreſs'd, I am refuſed juſtice, and brow-beaten and oppreſs'd; and ſuch miniſters remain unpuniſhed, and in favour, and parliaments are either diſſolv'd, or not call'd at the times, which the law has appointed for their meeting, and other illegal means are put in practice to skreen ſuch evil miniſters from juſtice: if this becomes a general complaint, and the king ſtill continues to cut off all hopes of redreſs, he then breaks his contract with the people. It is impoſſible, that this ſhould be done, but all the world muſt know it, yet the enemies of our conſtitution, by way of objection, ask us, Who is to be the judge of this breach,

which is the ſame, as if they asked, Who is to to be the judge that it is day at noon?

WHEN a monarch is the abſolute lord of every thing in his dominions, and he has not made yet any ſolemn irrevocable grants of privileges, or immunities to any of his vaſſals, his arbitrary will is their law, and an unlimited obedience is due to his commands, not interfering with the laws of GOD, tho' otherwiſe the moſt unreaſonable. But ſuch an extravagant power never laſted longer, than the force to execute and maintain it, and experience has taught princes long ſince, that tho' the law of GOD enjoins ſubjects to obey them, it is not ſafe to truſt to ſuch a ſlaviſh allegiance. If therefore a prince of wiſdom and penetration, conſidering, that he has almoſt every ſubject to fear, and none he can really truſt, ſhould for his own ſake be willing to deſiſt from this right of abſolute ſway, and ſhare the ſupreme power with his people in a manner and proportion, as he thinks fit, and they ſhall agree to: if a prince, I ſay, condeſcends to this, I can't ſee why a contract,

tract, thus ratified between him and his people, is not as binding as any other contract whatſoever. What men, who are not tied to any laws, are abſolute maſters of, they may part with and divide among whom they pleaſe. If the ſupreme power was the prince's property, and he thinks fit to beſtow part of it upon the people, the ſhare of it which he makes over to them becomes their property, as much, as it was the prince's before. This would be juſt by the law of nature, tho' the prince had no reaſon, or the leaſt motive, but his caprice, for ſo doing; but if he did it to rid himſelf of many fears and jealouſies, if he did it for the better ſecurity of his perſon and government, his quiet, his pleaſure, and the ſucceſſion to his poſterity, then likewiſe it becomes equitable according to the laws of nations and ſociety; becauſe it is evident, that the prince receives a valuable conſideration for what he gives away.

THOSE diſputants then, who in defending the doctrine of paſſive obedience compare our kings to abſolute monarchs, and in ſpight of all remonſtrances are ſtill

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applying the examples of arbitrary kingdoms, to be met with in ſacred and prophane hiſtory, to our conſtitution, ſeem to me to argue beſide the queſtion, and are to be treated as men, who deny firſt principles.

ANOTHER argument of contention is taken from the ſucceſſion of our kings, and the right of inheritance. Both parties agree, that our kingdom is hereditary, but one ſide will have it, that nothing can incapacitate the next heir in blood but idiotiſm or lunacy; but the other aſſert, that there may be ſeveral other reaſons to ſet aſide this right, of which being a *Roman* catholick is made one by law. They prove likewiſe, that it often has been ſet aſide among the Jews and other nations as well as our own. The advocates for hereditary right reply, that whenever this right was ſet aſide, it was done unjuſtly; that kings have this right from GOD, and, that no acts of parliament can make any alteration in it. They add, that kingly government is of divine inſtitution, and that conſequently the people cannot deprive them of it. This muſt car-

carry us back where we have been before in queſt of ſovereignty and the ſupreme power.

KINGLY government is of divine inſtitution by the doctrine of our church: I heartily believe it, and that kings are GOD's vicegerents; but I hope this is not meant only in behalf of abſolute monarchy with excluſion of all other forms of government. GOD commands us to be obedient to the higher powers: this duty, I conceive, we ought to pay not only to ſovereignty it ſelf, but likewiſe to all magiſtrates and ſuperiours, all rulers and officers, that either repreſent or act by the authority of the ſupreme government of a nation: but if the divines, in compliment to kings, would inſinuate, that no other form of government had any right of exacting obedience from their ſubjects, I ſhould believe that our church had loſt her infallibility, had a canon been made to eſtabliſh that doctrine; for from thence it muſt follow, the Great Mogul and the Grand Signior have a divine right to claim obedience of their ſubjects, which the republick of *Venice*, the ſtates general of the

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United Provinces, and the cantons of *Switzerland*, are deſtitute of. Kings then, that is, the higher powers in every nation, whether the ſovereignty be lodg'd in one or more perſons, are of divine inſtitution, and there is no doubt but the ſovereignty of all countries derive their right from GOD. But as to the divinity of hereditary right, if it was prov'd, which I yet never ſaw, it would be ſubject to the ſame alterations that government is, as to its form. The ſame authority that makes common-wealths and mix'd governments from abſolute monarchies, may alter the right of inheritance, prefer females to males, poſtpone or exclude them, and make what other regulations they think fit. In ſhort, the ſame authority, that eſtabliſhed the regal authority, and the ſucceſſion here in *England*, can alter it whenever the publick good requires it.

I ſhould not think my ſelf impartial, if I ſhould leave this ſubject without mentioning a ſcruple that has been perplexing even to men of candour. They have acknowledg'd the contract between the king and people, and the abſurdity of maintaining

taining that paſſive obedience can be due to any thing but the ſupreme power, the whole ſovereignty, and likewiſe own'd, that the great ſhare of ſovereignty the people are poſſeſs'd of, has been very viſible in all the tranſactions of the nation for above theſe hundred years; but if they trace the power and authority of the commons a little higher, they find it very mean and precarious, and the further they go, the more arbitrary they find our kings, and the leſs deference was paid to the commons. They may urge, that laws are never better underſtood, than at the time they are made, and therefore to judge well of the true intent and deſign of the conſtitution, we ought to look into the partition of power, as near the time it was made in as is poſſible.

SUCH another ſcruple may be moved in the affair of the ſucceſſion; for when we have agreed, that there is no expreſs law of GOD concerning the right of inheritance, and that the examples where the rule, by which the neareſt of blood inherit, has been follow'd, are hardly more numerous than the exceptions, where men have

have ſwerv'd from, and diſregarded it, we cannot find in our hiſtory any thing comparable to what was done at the revolution, and ſoon after. In all the ſtruggles that have been made by the princes and barons for the crown, the right of inheritance was always inſiſted upon, and never ſet aſide but by ſuperiour force. That thoſe who remain'd in poſſeſſion, always courted the conſent of parliaments, was to ſtrengthen their title, and to be the ſurer of the peoples allegiance that they might not revolt; but this precaution was always of little uſe, when a more powerful antagoniſt aroſe. This is certain, that both the king and the lords ſeem to be inveſted with much leſs authority than they were in former ages: and many think it as ſure, that parliaments have never calmly diſpoſed of the ſucceſſion to the prejudice of hereditary right before the revolution: but this is a miſtake. In the 35th of *Henry* the eighth, the parliament did in full time of peace, after the princeſſes *Mary* and *Eliſabeth* had been both declar'd illegitimate, ſettle the ſucceſſion of the crown in default of all other iſſue of *Henry* the eighth, male

or

or female, upon those two princesses successively; and they both enjoy'd it accordingly: tho' they could not possibly be both legitimate, and tho' neither of them were so accordingly as the law stood when they took possession of the crown. And tho' upon Queen *Mary*'s accession to the crown, the act was repeal'd, so far as it declared her illegitimate, yet it never was repeal'd to this day, so far as it declared Queen *Elisabeth* illegitimate: but in the 13th of her reign an act was passed, whereby the declaring, that the queen and parliament had no right to alter and bind the succession of the crown, was made, during her life, high treason, and, after her death, forfeiture of goods and chattels.

TO solve the other difficulty, and penetrate into the reason of the change that is observable in the authority of the three estates, we must take a view of the nation's condition in respect to the situation of property, and mastership, among the three estates. At the beginning of our constitution the king had vast possessions, and a great part of the kingdom was his property. The lords were few, had exorbitant

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eſtates among them, and ſome of them were ſo rich in land, and powerful in vaſſals, that one or two of thoſe barons often were a match for the king. The humble commons all this while were hardly a free people, and had not one inch of ground. The ſcene has been much alter'd long ſince; the kings have parted with conſiderable branches of their prerogative, and that crown lands are nothing to what they were, is no ſecret. The lords are numerous, and many of them not rich; the church has but little land left to what ſhe had, and the commons have for ſome time been poſſeſs'd of three fourths of the whole.

THE conſtitution therefore may be the ſame, that is, the ſovereignty is, as much as ever, lodg'd in the three eſtates, king, lords and commons; but conſidering the vaſt change that has been made in their poſſeſſions, it would be abſurd to think, that the three powers ſhould be the ſame they were in relation to each other. Time was, when the king and lords were both formidable, and each was jealous of the others power; for which reaſon neither

of the two would ſuffer the other to oppreſs the poor and helpleſs commons: but the face of things is alter'd, neither of the two firſt eſtates has reaſon to dread the other's power, and both of them together would not be an over-match for the third. So true it is, that dominion always follows property, and that, where the one is wanting, it will ever be impracticable for any long continuance to enforce the other.

FROM the abſolute ſway then exercis'd by our kings, and the vaſt authority of the lords in former ages, it does not appear that the commons were not a branch of the ſovereignty, or had a leſs ſhare in the legiſlature than they have now; their right was the ſame, but they had not the tools to maintain it. When kings and barons made war at their own charge, they had no occaſion to conſult or trouble their heads about the commons, who could not aſſiſt them but with their perſonal ſervice, which they had without calling of parliaments: but when great fleets are to be equipp'd, armies rais'd and maintain'd, general officers are to get eſtates,

and miniſtries to be enrich'd, when all this is to be done, and the purſe of the commons is to pay for it; when the very expences of the court, and all the various penſioners that belong to it are chiefly defray'd by them, it is no wonder, that they are often wanted, and have the deference ſhewn to them, which is due to the conſiderable ſhare they have in the ſovereignty.

As to the ſucceſſion the kingdom is hereditary, as much as ever it was; the hereditary right has been ſet aſide often, and as well formerly as at the revolution. All the quarrels that have been made about the ſucceſſion, have ever been decided by the longeſt ſword; and ſo was the laſt, with this difference, that the diſpute before was between the rival princes, and this was between the prince and the people. I know very well, that the convention was no parliament, but when king *James* had abdicated the kingdom, we muſt have been in the utmoſt confuſion, if the great men of the nation had not taken care of the government; and future ages, when they ſhall read this part of our hiſtory,

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and be acquainted with all the circumſtances of it, will be forc'd to admire the wiſdom of theſe times, and confeſs, to the praiſe of thoſe patriots who manag'd that affair, that to preſerve the religion, the liberty, and likewiſe the tranquillity of a nation, human prudence has never exerted it ſelf more conſpiciouſly on any other Emergency. We are told ſometimes that the king's abdication was not voluntary; but it is evident, that he was deſired to ſtay, and nothing drove him away but his own fears. He had claimed and exerciſed a deſpotick power inconſiſtent with the limited authority of the regal power which the laws veſted in him. He knew that he had broke through the laws, and that he had defy'd, and on many accounts moſt heartily provok'd, his ſubjects, and would not truſt to what they might do in their anger.

THERE is no fact ſo execrable, but the memory of it may be uſeful to poſterity, and the greateſt misfortunes that can befal a father, may prove inſtructive to his ſon. A prince who would be arbitrary, ought not to be hamper'd with the virtues of a pri-

vate man. When miniſters have been ſaviſhly obſequious to their prince's command, and not ſcrupled to betray both the nation and their truſt, to ſerve the ambition of their maſters, good natur'd princes are apt to love them in return, and think themſelves oblig'd to protect them: But this is wrong, a king, who is influenc'd by friendſhip, gratitude or generoſity, ought to curb his ambition, and content himſelf with governing according to law; but he who can part with a favourite for a trifle, and is ever ready to ſacrifice the deareſt tools of his ambition to his own ſecurity, may now and then attempt to encroach on his people, without great danger to his perſon. But that king, who lays a ſtreſs on the deluſive promiſes of paſſive obedience, and has too much confidence in his own divine right, will find at laſt, that he has truſted to a broken reed, and that the prince who will exert the utmoſt of his power to ſave the head of a miniſter, who has forfeited it, can never, whilſt the ſituation of property remains where it is, be ſafe upon the *Britiſh* throne.

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I return to our diſputes, and ſhall now obſerve, that where any are on foot, the moſt doubtful cauſe gets champions and abettors among thoſe who are not concern'd in nor well acquainted with the quarrel. Thoſe who at the revolution were either children, or are born after it, if their fathers agreed to or acquieſc'd in the alterations that were made in the ſucceſſion, are hardly excuſable for diſowning the preſent eſtabliſhment; their ſcruples are far fetch'd. If every body muſt be a judge of what was well or ill done in matters relating to the ſucceſſion of princes, or the conſtitution, we ſhall never want malecontents; and if there is no validity in the conſent of the people aſſembled, and acting in the moſt ſolemn manner, ſome will find as much reaſon to diſpute the divine right of *William* the firſt, as others pretend to have in diſowning that of *William* the third.

THOSE, who during the life of king *James*, after his abdication, would not ſwear allegiance to king *William*, and have ever ſince refus'd to take the oaths either to queen *Anne*, or his late majeſty, may have ſome plea for their ſcruples, at leaſt there

there is a poſſibility that they may be ſincere: but vaſt numbers are enemies to our tranquillity, that are neither candid in the remonſtrance of their grievances nor conſiſtent with themſelves. At one time they deny the validity of all acts of parliament made ſince the revolution: at another, they are in hopes of mending themſelves by a change of parties, and complain of the *Septennial-Act*, without conſidering that the law for *Triennial* parliaments had no being before the reign of king *William*. Sometimes they are religious, and an indefeaſible hereditary right is the only bar that hinders them from coming into the preſent eſtabliſhment; this they inſiſt upon, and are deaf to all remonſtrances: they can't be convinc'd; and many profligates that ſtick at no crimes, are in this point, and no other, conſcientious.

If this indefeaſible hereditary right is ſuperiour to all other claims and conſiderations, why did moſt of the malecontents ſwear allegiance to king *William* and queen *Anne*, and why have the greateſt part of them taken the oath to his late majeſty? If they anſwer, becauſe they are impos'd

pos'd under penalties, it is a ſign they are not to be depended upon, who will forſwear themſelves for intereſt, and the ſake of worldly conveniencies. An oath made to a king is an indiſſoluble as well as ſacred tye, whilſt the prince continues in the legal diſcharge of his office, or others by his conſent, and in his name, diſcharge it for him. Thoſe who talk of ſwallowing and waſhing down their oaths, and make a ſport with them, ought, in return, never to be treated ſeriouſly, and their very ſcruples of conſcience, if they pretend to any, be made a jeſt of.

To ſwear with mental reſervation has been counted abominable, even by heathens. When *Euripides*, in one of his Tragedies made *Hippolitus* ſay, that he had ſwore with his tongue, and not with his mind, it mov'd * the *Athenians* with indignation: the thought ſeem'd ſo looſe to them, that though *Hippolitus* choſe rather to dye than to violate that verbal oath, they call'd the poet in queſtion for it: the expreſſion it ſelf was ſhocking, and

* Barnes in vita Euripid.

they

they could not endure, that any one ſhould be repreſented, even upon the ſtage, with ſuch words in his mouth. If it be certain, that he who has ſworn has ſuppos'd a fact, that is not actually ſo, and that unleſs he had believ'd that fact, he would not have ſworn; in ſuch a caſe, ſays *Grotius*, an * oath obliges not. What pity 'tis our oath-ſwallowers have not ſuch an excuſe to make!

HEREDITARY right is what the favourors of the pretender, of late years, have laid all their ſtreſs upon, as if his birth had never been ſuſpected to have been ſpurious. The law, I know, which bars all papiſts from the crown, is a ſufficient guard againſt him; but it is ſtrange that a thing ſo uncertain, (if not unlikely) as his legitimacy, ſhould by time, and nothing elſe, be put all together out of the queſtion. Among the ſeveral reaſons generally alledged for *Pyrrhoniſm* in hiſtory, the remoteneſs of the time which things were wrote in, is always reckon'd one of the chief; but in the caſe of the pretender, there is ſuppos'd

* Grotius de jure belli & pacis, *l.* 2. *c.* 13.

ſome-

ſomething which ſeems to derive its certainty from nothing elſe, but that people have forgot, or elſe never knew, the circumſtances that made it doubtful.

THE queſtion is, whether the queen was deliver'd of a ſon or not? thoſe who maintain the affirmative, produce many witneſſes of reputation both to the pregnancy and the delivery: They will not allow, that the oaths of *Roman* catholicks ſhould be leſs credited than thoſe of proteſtants, becauſe both are of equal validity in law; for which reaſon they aſſert, that the queen was actually brought to bed of a ſon, and ask what evidence can be brought to the contrary. To this may be anſwer'd, that it is often impoſſible to prove a negative, eſpecially in ſuch a caſe, if people may be allow'd to ſuffer no body about them but of their own chuſing; and as to the oaths of *Roman* catholicks, that notwithſtanding their validity in law, it is certain that the popes not only claim a power to abſolve men of them, but have actually, as far as their authority could do it, forgiven as heinous crimes as perjury; that every ſtep towards the reduction of

ſuch a kingdom as this to the obedience of the holy ſee, muſt be look'd upon at *Rome*, as a matter of the higheſt concern to the church. I muſt own, that was this mighty work to be accompliſhed at the expence of five thouſand falſe oaths, and nothing wanting but a formal abſolution to indemnify the jurors, ſign'd by the holy father, and the whole college of cardinals, I ſhould think *Great Britain* in no ſmall danger of popery.

THE reaſons, which thoſe who hold the negative, offer for believing that a child was impos'd upon the nation, beſides ſome ſuſpicions and ſurmiſes of things, that cannot eaſily be proved, are theſe. In the firſt place they ſay, that as ſoon as it was reported that the queen was with child, it was every where buzz'd about, that it would be a prince, and that during her pregnancy, the *Roman* catholicks, and all who favour'd arbitrary power, were as inſolent upon it, as the certainty of the thing could have made them: that before the queen was near her time, ſhe ſeem'd very irreſolute in fixing upon a place where to lye in, and at laſt, when prepa-

rations

rations had been made, and all had been ready for ſome time in one palace, things were in great haſte removed to another; that all this while there had been at court ſeveral ſtarts and ſudden motions; ſometimes every thing appear'd gay and proſperous, at others the courtiers look'd as if all was loſt, and there were ſuch continual whiſperings among them, as are obſerv'd where ſome myſterious intrigue, or deep deſign of great importance is carrying on; and laſtly, that thoſe, who by the law and cuſtom of *England* ſhould be preſent at the queen's delivery, were not there.

THIS laſt they lay the greater ſtreſs upon, becauſe the court knew, that all the proteſtants of *Europe* expected a cheat. What the other ſide replies to this is weak, for to ſay, that the duke of *Monmouth* being beheaded, the king had no body to fear, and that the queen was a haughty, imperious woman, who would not ſhew ſo much complaiſance to the nation, as to ſatisfy them in this particular; and that, though the king knew that the law required the preſence of ſeveral perſons,

the queen was obſtinate and ungovernable. To alledge this, I ſay, is not ſufficient in a caſe of ſo high a concern; all *Europe* had their eyes upon them, had every thing been fair, no court in the world would have made ſuch a falſe ſtep, when they could not be ignorant that they were ſuſpected. A woman is not fit to be a king's wife, who, on ſuch an occaſion, ſhould ſcruple to admit a hundred ſtrangers if it was required. What would not a princeſs do on an emergency, where her glory, the welfare of her poſterity, the peace of nations, her all is at ſtake! *Conſtantia*, [a] queen of *Sicily*, not to give the leaſt ſuſpicion, was brought to bed, and lay-in publickly in the plains and meadows of *Palermo*.

To this we muſt add the juncture of time it was done in. King *James* left no ſtone unturn'd to introduce popery, which would have ſignify'd little for his reign, if his ſucceſſor had been a proteſtant: all the machinations of the prieſts would have been in vain, unleſs a male heir could be

[a] Brantome Dames illuſtr.

had;

had; it was the ſheet-anchor of all their hopes. King *James* could not obtain his ends without arbitrary meaſures; he miſtruſted his people, and would have nothing to do with parliaments, and there was nothing the cauſe ſtood in more abſolute need of than the birth of a prince, that at once ſhould blaſt all the hopes of the proteſtant heirs, and ſtrengthen the king in the illegal courſes he had reſolv'd upon. It is eaſier for a nation to judge of a matter in diſpute, when it happens, and all things relating to it are in every body's view, than when the thing is over, and the circumſtances that accompanied it are loſt out of ſight; beſides ſome have forgot, others never known any thing of them, but imperfectly from books or tradition, both of which are ſeldom otherwiſe than partial.

WHEN all theſe things are conſider'd, the pretender's being born of the queen will not be ſo clear as many imagine. Eight in ten of the people then living did not believe that the queen had a child; how comes it that above three and thirty years after, it ſhould be expected that the

ſame nation ſhould believe that ſhe had, without receiving any further proof than what they had before? For what happen'd in *France* is as much an evidence againſt, as it is for his legitimacy. When moſt people ſuſpected him to be a ſuppoſititious child, and the fruitfulneſs of the queen was a thing much doubted of, nothing was more neceſſary than that ſhe ſhould have another, to remove the ſuſpicion from the firſt; and had the court art enough to procure ſuch a male child in *England*, where they were watch'd, at a time it was ſo much againſt the proteſtant intereſt they ſhould have one, it was no difficulty to ſuborn one of either ſex in *France*, where no body over-look'd or obſerv'd them.

I know very well, that all theſe things may be turn'd a quite contrary way, and be ſet in another light; but I know likewiſe, that the probabilities are no more on that ſide, than they are on this: the thing is doubtful, and ſo it is like to remain. It was king *James*'s fault, that the method the law preſcribes to clear the doubt was not put in practice, and we have

have no ſuch obligation to his memory, as by an eaſy credulity to ſupply his want of precaution, which perhaps was part of the impoſture.

No man is leſs bigotted to any party than my ſelf, but there are facts that are undeniable. About the time this pretended prince was born, the king of *France* was wholly bent on the execution of the ſcheme he had ſo long made for the univerſal monarchy of *Europe*. The court of *England* was one of his tools, the king then on the throne a weak, good-natur'd, eaſy, ſuperſtitious prince, who was rul'd by his queen, a monſtrous bigot to popery, a haughty, violent, crafty, *Italian* ſpirit. All heads at *Rome* were at work, and all capable emiſſaries employ'd, and they had all the aſſiſtance the king and queen could give, to reduce *England* to the obedience of the holy ſee. *France* had with her gold brib'd moſt princes and miniſtries in chriſtendom into a lethargy. A ſtrict friendſhip and alliance was made between that court and ours. And now the ſlavery of *Europe* ſeem'd unavoidable. The knowing men of *England* ſaw this, were uneaſy,

but could not help themſelves. King *James* had erected an eccleſiaſtical court to introduce his religion, and on ſeveral other accounts violated the laws; but he had a fine ſtanding army, was rich himſelf, and receiv'd great ſupplies from *France*. The only bulwark of the proteſtant intereſt were the ſtates-general; but what could they do againſt two powerful kingdoms?

IT was then the deſign of the revolution was form'd, and happily brought about, whilſt the great genius of *William* the third rous'd the courts of *Europe* from their indolence, ſhew'd them the common danger, and made ſeveral of them arm againſt the deluſions and exorbitant power of *France*. Our poſterity a thouſand years hence will find, that the wiſdom and vaſt abilities of this prince ſpoil'd and put a ſtop to the grand deſign which *Lewis* the fourteenth had form'd againſt *Europe*, and ſapp'd his deepeſt machinations. When they ſhall ſee from the loſſes *France* has been able to ſuſtain, how vaſtly ſuperiour ſhe was to all her enemies, how king *William* was perplex'd at home, how many trea-

treacheries he had to cope with, they will be forc'd to conclude, that to have done what he did, he muſt have been a prodigious man: no body then will doubt, that he was the preſerver of the proteſtant intereſt, and the liberties of chriſtendom. Thoſe who are too ſevere criticks on the actions of princes, and by bold conjectures ſupply the gaps and hidden parts of hiſtory, perhaps will ſay of him, that he was of a reſtleſs ſpirit, more fit for war than peace, and that his perſonal ennity to *Lewis* the fourteenth turn'd his ambition the right way, which otherwiſe might have proved leſs advantageous to the liberties he aſſerted; but they will be forc'd to confeſs, that he was, as to perſonal expences, a frugal, a manly, laborious, heroick prince, and a conſummate politician, leſs given to luxury and pleaſure than any of his time.

To the foreſight of this great king, the proteſtant cauſe is indebted for the excluſion of all papiſts from the crown, and the eſtabliſhing the ſucceſſion in the illuſtrious houſe of *Hanover*, who were the next proteſtant heirs: and this ſince, after his

his death, has been confirm'd with all the ſolemnity and unanimous conſent, that parliaments can proceed in. During almoſt the whole reign of Q. *Anne*, the princeſs *Sophia*, of bleſſed memory, was the next and preſumptive heir to the crown; his late majeſty, by right of inheritance, as her eldeſt ſon, was poſſeſs'd of the throne, which the princeſs his mother muſt have fill'd by a parliamentary eſtabliſhment of almoſt thirty years ſtanding. Theſe are truths that muſt be laſting, and which time or faction ſhall not eraſe.

CHAP.

CHAP. XII.

Of National Happineſs.

THAT *Great Britain* is a happy iſland, and well ſtor'd magazine of native bleſſings, whether we look on the ſituation, the ſoil, the climate, or the inhabitants of it, is undeniable. The firſt guards us from foreign inſults by the ſeas that ſurround us, and ſecures us from the rage of their incroaching waves, almoſt every where, by ſolid cliffs, and impenetrable rocks. The ſecond is fertile in moſt parts, and admits of many improvements. All the neceſſaries of life we have of our own growth, and many ſuperfluities. As we want olives, wine and ſpices, ſo we are free from the violent heats that are requir'd to produce them; but then of our own product we have generally ſuch a ſtore as is able to pur-

purchaſe all the various implements of pride and luxury, from the richeſt nations and the remoteſt corners of the earth in a ſurpriſing plenty. Our climate is ſtill more happy; it is the moſt moderate, at leaſt the ſouth part of it, in the univerſe, and no country has leſs cold in winter, that is not ſubject to greater heat in ſummer. What king *Charles* the ſecond ſaid on this head was very judicious: in his preſence one day the weather happen'd to be the ſubject of the diſcourſe; and as ſome foreign miniſters complain'd of the uncertainty of our's, and were bragging of the ſerenity of the air in their own country; [a] *The beſt climate*, ſaid the king, *in my opinion is that, in which a man may be abroad with comfort moſt hours in the day, and moſt days in the year.*

THE people of *Great Britain* are docile and induſtrious, warlike when occaſion requires, and obſtinate when provok'd: they are excellent artificers in moſt handicrafts, but more noted for improvements than invention. The moſt uſeful of them, that

[a] *Sir* William Temple's *Memoirs.*

is,

is, thoſe inured to labour, are indefatigable, when employ'd to their mind. There is no toil ſo immenſe which they will not undergo, nor hardſhip they will flinch from, if they engage heartily in it, and the wages or rewards are proportion'd to their trouble. Their very diverſions are laborious, and few are ſlothful where profit or a proſpect of ſome other advantage is ſtirring. The removing of merchandizes of all ſorts, eſpecially our fuel to and from different places, require great ſlight, but more robuſtneſs, and on this account there is more bodily ſtrength exerted to the beſt advantage, and more work done in *London*, than by the ſame number of hands you ſhall find perform'd any where elſe; nor is there a place in the world, where the ſlaving people of the loweſt rank, that will and can work, either get and ſpend more money chearfully than they do in this city, where vaſt multitudes are continually employ'd in mixing hard labour with good fellowſhip.

In ſhape and gracefulneſs of body, the *Britiſh* nation are ſecond to none; I

might ſay more of wit and beauty, but that I think them to be trifles, not always beneficial, and let who will count them among the national bleſſings, I ſhall always believe, that if we had leſs of both, we ſhould be more happy, and not half ſo fickle; but then to make amends for what we ſuffer by theſe, there is no nation, where good ſenſe is more generally eſteem'd at its true value, and very few, where ſo great a vein of it runs through the vulgar. But the moſt ſubſtantial bleſſing, and the peculiar happineſs we enjoy above all other countries, are the laws and liberties of *England*. Let ſlaves and flatterers of princes, with all the abettors of arbitrary power tell us, that what we call liberty is licentiouſneſs; an *Engliſhman* knows better, and can anſwer them, that whilſt we deſire no liberties, but what the laws allow, and every one obeys them in the ſtricteſt manner, the ſubject in our conſtitution receives a noble freedom from the ſame ſovereignty, to which he owes his allegiance. From page 337 to 344 I have hinted at what our great happineſs conſiſts in.

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In *Switzerland* the bayliffs are petty tyrants in every diſtrict, and in *Holland* the magiſtrates of every city are arbitrary in many things, and men are capitally puniſh'd without publick tryal: but what we, and only we may boaſt of, is, that throughout the globe there is not a country, great or ſmall, where the men of the higheſt rank can do leſs injury to their inferiours, and even to the loweſt with impunity than in *England*. This privilege, without which all the joys and comforts of life are precarious, is the grand characteriſtick of *Engliſh* liberty, and a felicity, which it is not in the power of wit or eloquence to over-rate.

Since ſo many bleſſings then conſpire, what hinders us from being happy; for it is certain we are not ſo? A ſincere man would no more flatter his country than he would the meaneſt perſon in it. Our diſcontent and grumblings are publickly known, and all *Europe* hear us murmur in the midſt of ſo much eaſe, and greater plenty than any empire, ſtate or kingdom now enjoys. Should any ſtate phyſician behold our goodly countenance, and, having

ving felt our low diſpirited pulſe, examine into the real cauſe of all our grievances, he muſt infallibly pronounce the nation hypp'd. No woman in the height of vapours is more whimſical in her complaints than ſome of us, and melancholy madmen have not more diſmal apprehenſions of things in the blackeſt fits of the ſpleen, than our ſtate hypochondriacks are daily buzzing in our ears. In diſtempers, where the imagination is chiefly affected, men, without any other remedies, may often reaſon themſelves into health.

WHOEVER would be happy ſhould endeavour to be wiſe; and as this conſiſts in having a diffuſive knowledge of the real worth of things, and a capacity of chuſing on all emergencies what to ſound and unbyaſs'd reaſon would ſeem the moſt eligible, ſo it is by ſhaking off all cloggs of prejudice, and fetters of human authority, by thinking freely, that men can only mount to wiſdom. There is no better way of curing groundleſs jealouſy and pannick fears, than by daring to examine and boldly look things in the face. As with this freedom, I have treated of the church,

diſtin-

diſtinguiſh'd between that and religion, ſpoke of government, and the obedience due to it, and briefly touch'd on our differences about the ſucceſſion of our kings, ſo now I ſhall with the ſame liberty preſent my readers with an open view of courts and miniſters.

KINGS that are abſolute, or would be ſo, are dreadful creatures all the world over. Conſidering their education as princes, and the flattery they are ever ſurrounded with, it is GOD's mercy that any of them are tolerable. In limited monarchies kings have greater opportunities of practiſing ſelf-denial, and moderating their deſires. As they are vaſtly ſuperiour to the higheſt ſubject, ſo we ought not to judge of them as we do of other men, and the two greateſt virtues our nation can pray for in a monarch, are, that he may ever delight in the true exerciſe of his great power, and always abſtain from wiſhing to encreaſe it. Theſe, without any other addition, can never fail of making him a bleſſing to his people, who, in return, owe him their homage and their hearts, which to expreſs, they ought cheerfully to be at

the charge of entertaining him and his family in diſtinguiſh'd magnificence, and take care that on all accounts he is ſerv'd, approach'd, and addreſs'd to with the moſt humble ſubmiſſion, and ſuperlative reſpect, and nothing be wanting about his perſon of what ſplendid affluence can procure towards the enjoyment of the moſt delicious eaſe and the height of earthly glory. This we perform.

So many ſervices require abundance of people of various employments, who are well vers'd in all manner of elegancy and politeneſs; the ſeveral branches of the publick adminiſtration demand many officers of different ranks and capacities, all which make up a conſiderable number of perſons, of whom ſeveral have large ſalaries and other emoluments, and not a few great opportunities of enriching themſelves. From what has been ſaid we may eaſily imagine, that the courts of our kings, how frugal and virtuous ſoever the monarch may be himſelf, muſt be places of pomp and luxury, ſtately academies of all manner of pleaſure and diverſions, where men learn to excite, as well as to indulge their

appe-

appetites, and all the paſſions and ſenſations are refin'd upon.

THOUGH every courtier in his turn has a ſhare in theſe worldly enjoyments, yet the whole machine ſeems only contriv'd to do honour to the king, and every creature there appears in his ſtation, as if he was only born to procure him either eaſe or pleaſure. To make this not look as if it was done in jeſt, the higheſt officers of all are often oblig'd to a certain ſtrictneſs of attendance and ſeveral ſervices, which would be counted vile and abject if perform'd to any other. What makes the men of the firſt quality amends for this condeſcenſion, is, that the ſame complaiſance, and very near the ſame homage, is paid to them by thoſe of the ſecond rank, and ſo on; which renders the whole a gaudy ſociety of ſubordinate ſlavery, where each member has an object to envy, and none can ſubſiſt without the profoundeſt diſſimulation.

LET us now examine what ſort of people it is moſt probable would reſort to ſuch places as I have deſcrib'd courts to be, and we ſhall obſerve, that they either

are ambitious men, who are reſtleſs after greatneſs, and ſtrive in vain to find a comfort in being ever diſſatisfy'd with their preſent condition, or elſe thoſe of a more abject pride, who want to lord it over others, and from a baſeneſs in their nature, delight in being bow'd and cring'd to by all that ſtand in need of them: thoſe that are tainted with the vice of *Cataline*, and are greedy after the poſſeſſions of others, only to heighten the ſatisfaction they feel in throwing away their own: the covetous with mean ſouls and no conſcience, that will beg, if they cannot plunder, and do any thing to be rich. Theſe, and the men of pleaſure and ſenſuality, are generally the perſons whom their inclinations drive to court; and, except ſome few, who ſue for places to be reveng'd on others, the reſt are commonly vain people, that love ſhew and gawdineſs, and from an idle and plentiful education, have learned to delight in nothing but the outſide of things.

I ſhall be ask'd, Are there then no ſtateſmen, no men of parts, of erudition, of capacity for buſineſs, that will be laborious?

borious? Yes, ſeveral, that are guilty of the vices I named, are ſuch at all courts, or elſe the affairs of ſtate could not be manag'd; yet the greater the plenty is, generally the leſs will be the application among them. But are there none then, who, beſides thoſe good qualifications, have noble ſouls, and humanity, and are free from thoſe vices? Not many, and ſuch of them as take it in their heads to be courtiers, are generally men eager after ſenſual pleaſures, and perverting the accompliſhments of nature and learning to a wrong ſtudy, ſpend the beſt part of their time in refining upon *Epicuriſm* of all ſorts. Good men, that are lovers of their country, and fit to be miniſters of ſtate, are ſcarce at all courts. A perſon who is contented with what he has, that hates noiſe and inſincerity, and having no revenge to execute, or other irregular paſſion to gratify, is one who knows how to value his own liberty, and deſires nothing ſlaviſh of others; ſuch a perſon, I ſay, what ſhould he do at court? For a man ſo qualified, who has polite learning, and a good fortune, if he underſtands the worth of things,

and

and has a true taſte of life, may better divert himſelf almoſt any where elſe.

THE men of the higheſt quality and ample fortunes by inheritance, may come to honour, and pay their reſpects to their prince, aſſiſt at councils and other ſolemnities where their preſence is required by their birth, but they ſeldom offer themſelves for the ſervice of their country, when qualify'd as I deſcrib'd. It is an ungrateful task, when well perform'd, and honeſt men generally fare the worſt. As to religion and true piety, ſhould any one who is but inclin'd to it, get into court, there's [a] half a diſtich ready, by its merit almoſt become a proverb, that will bid him go out of it the firſt thing he does.

IT is incredible what benefit may accrue to us from this thorough knowledge of courts: firſt it will take away at once all thoſe heavy complaints we are always making againſt our kings about the choice of their miniſters. There are good men at all courts, but not ſuch a vaſt plenty of them as people imagine, and the beſt

[a] Exeat ex aula qui cupit eſſe pius.

judge

judge can chuſe no better commodity than the markets afford. Secondly it will cure us of that miſchievous credulity, with which we are ſo ready to believe, according as we are influenc'd either by love or hatred of a party, whatever is told us of the virtues or vices of miniſters. He that knows how courtiers throw their own faults upon others; their artifices in ſpreading reports; the faſtening of ſlander; the mines they dig for one another's deſtruction; the deep craft of their intrigues, and all other machinations in practice among them, will have but little faith in what is rumour'd about publick miniſters.

THERE is nothing more difficult than to know a good man from a bad one, and the juggle of courts is to one who is not in the ſecret, what a game of cheſs is to a man wholly ignorant of it: as the one may ſee the gameſters move every piece, and yet not underſtand what is aim'd at, without being a fool, ſo the other may be in all the buſtle of the court, without knowing what is carrying on, and be a man of parts at the ſame time. The envy,

vy, ſtrife, and all the feuds and jealouſies of courts are ſo many ſafeguards to the liberty of the people, they never fail producing ſevere cenſors of thoſe at helm, that watch over all their actions, magnify their failings, and heighten the leaſt overſight into a capital crime; and the falſe ſteps of miniſters are often not ſo much owing to the neglects of thoſe who make them, as they are to the rubs and impediments which the malice of a crafty adverſary has found means to fling in their way. Court intrigues are a perpetual warfare, where men are oblig'd to cut their trenches crooked, or be unavoidably expos'd to all the artillery of their enemies hatred.

WHEN parliaments are ſitting, all the buſy part of the year miniſters have no great opportunities of doing any conſiderable damage to the nation, and ſeldom will attempt it. The laws and legiſlature are curbs which the boldeſt as well as the craftieſt ſtand in awe of, and a better ſecurity for the people than all the virtues miniſters can be poſſeſs'd of. See underneath

derneath [a] the opinion of an anonymous author. The general complaints made againſt all miniſtries are, that they abuſe the king's ear and favour, and employ all their induſtry in keeping others from him; that they enrich themſelves too faſt, poſtpone the publick to their private intereſt, and engroſs all places of truſt, of honour, and of profit among themſelves, their families and friends, with excluſion of all others, and no regard to merit or capacity.

THESE are all articles that men in power have ever been accus'd with by the malecontents, and whether there ever yet was a miniſtry, that was altogether free from thoſe faults, and every part of them or not, I leave others to determine. But where is the man who judges of them without prejudice? The courtiers,

[a] *One good man may take another's word, if they ſo agree, but a whole nation ought never to truſt to any honeſty, but what is built upon neceſſity. For unhappy is the people, and their conſtitution muſt be ever precarious, whoſe welfare muſt depend upon the virtues and conſciences of miniſters and politicians.* Fable of the bees, *Pag.* 169.

who are influenc'd by the warm beams of GOD's vicegerents, are by their panegyriſts repreſented like angels; when that ſun ceaſes to ſhine upon them, they fall; after which they are thought to meditate as much miſchief and revenge, to injure mankind, as thoſe of old; at the ſame time they become the patriots of thoſe, who were their enemies before. A whole ſet of ſtateſmen of different tempers and capacities, virtues and vices, are extoll'd to the skies in one company, in another they are damn'd to the pit of hell, and as often as theſe great men change ſides, ſo often ſhall thoſe companies change their language: a plain demonſtration that we are far diſtant from knowing the truth, and very inſincere in our opinions.

As to be happy we ought on the one hand not to rely too much upon the virtue and probity of politicians, ſo on the other we ought carefully to avoid miſconſtruing their actions. How we have murmur'd at the war with *Spain!* and how unjuſtly charg'd the king with being the firſt aggreſſor! The *Spaniards*, under the violent ſway of an haughty prieſt, would

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impoſe laws upon us; they render our trade with them precarious and impracticable, equip a great fleet, and make preparations for an invaſion, and provide all neceſſaries to raiſe a rebellion in the kingdom: they diſtreſs our allies, and treat the pretender to his majeſty's crown with all the marks of honour and eſteem that can be paid to a great monarch. King *George* ſees it, arms againſt them, beats their fleet, and, by the aſſiſtance of his allies, breaks and ruins all the meaſures of *Spain*, and makes them diſmiſs the great favourite, and ſue for peace. An *Engliſh* man who loves his country, and complains of this conduct, muſt be an arch politician.

WE ought likewiſe to forbear judging raſhly of miniſters and their actions, eſpecially when we are unacquainted with every circumſtance of an affair. Meaſures may be rightly concerted, and ſuch caſualties intervene, as may make the beſt deſign miſcarry. We ſhould not complain when the intentions of men are manifeſtly good, and they act for the intereſt of the

nation, and fruſtrate the deſigns of the enemy.

IT is wrong alſo, when we differ in opinion, to charge men with having ill deſigns, when the matter in debate may be variouſly interpreted, and admit of innumerable ſpeculations. It is very difficult to judge what things, which we never had any experience of, would produce, if they were to be. I am neither for nor againſt the peerage bill, becauſe it is above my capacity to judge of it; and I have often wonder'd to hear people with ſmall knowledge ſpeak confidently of what would be the conſequences of it. From ſuch ſubjects I own the men of eloquence, of wit, and of learning of both ſides, receive great opportunities of ſetting themſelves off, and diſplaying their parts, but thoſe who are both ſincere and impartial will hardly promiſe to affirm any thing about it with certainty. In the chapter of *Government*, I have hinted at the difference between our times and three or four hundred years ago, as to the property of the king, lords and commons. Had the lords never had the power of making their land alienable, and

and kings could not have parted with what belong'd to the crown, the property of the whole, except what the church is poſſeſs'd of, muſt ſtill have been veſted in the king and lords; and the vaſt diminution in the property of the peers, is altogether owing to the liberty they have ſince receiv'd of ſelling their eſtates. What prudence or penetration could have foreſeen this?

HUMAN underſtanding is too ſhallow to foreſee the reſult of what is ſubject to many variations. A man may be well vers'd in ſtate affairs, have wit, penetration, a perfect knowledge of the world, and every thing requiſite to make a compleat politician, and yet not be able to make any tolerable gueſſes of what will enſue from a thing which is new, and he can get no inſight into, either from hiſtory, or his own experience. A man may underſtand one game at tables very well, and be a great while endeavouring before he is maſter of another that is nearly related to it; I ſpeak of games of difficulty and ſpeculation: he can never judge with any ſolidity which is the beſt play, be-

fore he has often ſeen it, and has an experience of the varieties in it, and is acquainted with the ſudden changes it is ſubject to, what contingencies are uſual in it, and which are counted extraordinary. I ſhall make no other apology for the lowneſs of this ſimile, than the example of *Terence*, who has ſo handſomely compar'd [a] human life to a game at tables, where it behoves every one, if he throws not what he ſtands in need of, and could have wiſh'd for, by his play to make the moſt of what he has thrown, and by his skill ſupply the deficiencies of his luck.

THAT we may not miſconſtrue the intentions of princes and politicians, another caution is requiſite, which is, to avoid launching out beyond the ſphere of our underſtanding: a man may be an induſtrious trader, of ſenſe and equity, and have good notions of the *Meum* and *Tuum* of private perſons, and yet not be able to

[a] Ita eſt in vita hominum, quaſi, cum ludas teſſeris,
Si illud, quod maxume opus eſt jactu, non cadit,
Illud, quod cecidit forte, id arte ut corrigas.
Terent. Adelph. Act. iv. Scen. vii.

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determine any thing concerning the property of nations. There is no tribunal upon earth, to which ſovereigns can appeal for the deciſion of their differences, and therefore in all conferences and peaceable debates among the nations in *Europe*, the ballance of power muſt ever be the ſtandard, that all property and poſſeſſion, as well as friendſhip and alliances are to be weigh'd by. What elſe could have juſtify'd our demands for the demolition of *Dunkirk*? Many who ſome time ago complain'd that the garriſon of *Gibraltar* was an exceſſive charge to us, and that in time of peace it was of no manner of uſe, ſeem now highly concern'd at the very ſurmiſe, that we are to part with a fortreſs of that importance. I pretend to no foreſight, but I ſhall wonder ſhould the reſt of the powers of *Europe* let it remain in our poſſeſſion.

THIS I am ſure of, that it is inconſiſtent with the ſafety of our trade, that it ever ſhould be in the hands of a nation ſo powerful in ſhipping as either the *Dutch* or the *French*, and I am afraid they will think themſelves obliged to ſay the ſame

of us. There are artful people who, foreſeeing this, make a handle of it, for murmurs and diſcontent, by inſinuating that whenever we part with *Gibraltar*, it muſt be by the neglect or treachery of the miniſtry. If we conſider how ſelfiſh and obſtinate moſt people are, and how little they would part with any thing they think their own, it can be no difficult task to make the multitude fall in with theſe notions, who can't make a difference between the poſſeſſions of private perſons, where the ſame law governs all, and thoſe of ſovereign ſtates and kingdoms, that are only accountable to GOD. *Gibraltar* is in *Spain*, as much as *Portſmouth* is in *Great Britain*, and whoever may prove a better title to it than the *Spaniards*, none are fitter in the *Quadruple Alliance* to be poſſeſs'd of it, and give leſs umbrage to the neighbouring powers. If theſe criticks on the publick management were in earneſt, and really animated by the love of their country, they would never publickly exaggerate the great moment that place is of, and how vaſtly advantageous it would be to *Great Britain* on many accounts, in caſe

of

of a rupture with her allies; but conſider, that every article prov'd on this head is an argument put in the mouths of the allies for the unreaſonableneſs of our keeping it.

GREAT cauſes of diſquiet may likewiſe be avoided, by forbearing to meddle with what is above, or at leaſt foreign to us; it is ill manners for ſubjects to pry into the family affairs of their kings; their paſtimes, their pleaſures and diverſions, have nothing to do with the ſtate; but is it religion that awakens our care? then why are we inſincere? We rail at concubines in one prince, who is very moderate in his amours; in him the want of chaſtity is a heinous ſin, it eclipſes all his good qualities, and is a ſubject we can never have done with; when at the ſame time we extol the good ſenſe, the politeneſs, the majeſty, and are always laviſh in the praiſes on the memory, without ever mentioning as a reproach the incontinency of another prince, whoſe life was an entire ſcene of unlawful love, and rambling laſciviouſneſs at a vaſt expence, diſplay'd on a multitude of objects.

WHEN

WHEN we have put the beſt conſtruction on things, they will admit of, and ſtill meet with grievances that are real, and which every reaſonable man would wiſh to have redreſs'd, there is a happineſs in endeavouring to extenuate rather than aggravate them. Are we angry, that the king is adviſ'd by ſo many ſtrangers, that his miniſtry engroſs him to themſelves, and that none of our friends can get into places of truſt or profit, let us examine our ſelves, and conſider how much we ſhould value ſuch complaints in our adverſaries, if we were in favour, and the king made uſe of us. We ſhould not forget what we anſwered to them a conſiderable part of the laſt reign: it is very hard every private perſon may order his family as he pleaſes, without being controul'd, and the King of *Great Britain* ſhould not have the liberty of chuſing his own ſervants. I will eaſily grant, that it is not pleaſant to a nation, to ſee much wealth divided among foreigners, but we have this comfort, that they can only be ſo for themſelves; their poſterity will be the ſame with ours. Moſt of our fore-

foreſathers were once ſtrangers, but the firſt children, they begot here, were *Engliſh*. When courtiers, that are foreigners, enrich themſelves with our money, their heirs ſpend it among us, and the ſons often with the ſame application, that the fathers ſcrap'd it together.

BUT ſhould this be a real cauſe of complaint, thoſe, who have no ambition to be great, honeſt men, who ſcorn to be beholden to any thing but their own induſtry for a livelihood, and all that can neither cringe, nor beg for a maintenance, having nothing to do with it. They are only courtiers, or ſuch as would be ſo, that can be affected by it. In behalf of them, let us caſt an eye on the remedy they preſcribe, and which ſo many of us hanker after in fear and ſilence, I mean the *Pretender*. It is manifeſt at firſt view, that this cannot eaſe us: for if we cannot bear the king's gratifying a few of his countrymen, how ſhould we have patience, or be able to diſcharge all the obligations the *Pretender* has made in ſo many countries? what papiſt in *Europe* is he not indebted to? I don't mean for their pray-

prayers and hearty wiſhes only: he has receiv'd ſubſtantial benefits from *Frenchmen*, *Spaniards*, *Italians*, and others, and whenever he is able to beſtow any favours, great part of *Poland* muſt come in for a ſhare.

THESE conſiderations I know would be of little weight with many: what if our purſes pay for it they would ſay, our conſciences ſhall be eas'd; indefeaſible, hereditary right ſhall take place: tell us but, what we ſhall do to get him. Here indeed is the difficulty. To obtain this mighty bleſſing, we muſt in the firſt place break the oath of allegiance, which we have taken to the king. But zealous people will not ſcruple to forſwear themſelves for conſcience ſake, and if it be a ſin, there are clergymen enough in *England*, that will abſolve them of it, even before it is committed. In the ſecond we muſt raiſe a rebellion and fight for him; the *Quadruple Alliance* ſeems not very favourable for ſuch attempts; and if the *Pretender* could find a foreign force to bring him hither, there is leſs doubt that king GEORGE on the other hand would have allies to

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aſſiſt him, who would always augment their forces, as the friends of the *Pretender* encreas'd. What havock would this make of the kingdom, and when would our miſery be at an end? Can we imagine that either his majeſty, or the prince, on any diſaſter, would leave us as the *Pretender* left *Scotland?* They are neither of them counted cowards as ever I heard of, and we have no reaſon to think either of them very changeable, when they are fix'd upon a thing.

MANY years might we fight for nothing but dry blows; for the probability of conqueſt is not on the *Pretender*'s ſide, and if his friends were much more numerous, and their power greater than they are, his caſe would be at beſt but very hazardous. But what ſhall we venture all this for? What is the end the malecontents propoſe of their labours? and what the mighty prize to be obtain'd? The *Pretender*, whoſe birth is at beſt but dubious, a popiſh bigot, who never was acquainted with men that underſtood, or dared to ſpeak of liberty, and has converſed from his cradle with the groſſeſt flatterers,

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and the moſt ſlaviſh aſſertors of arbitrary power. What a ſcope is here for declamation! but the cauſe I plead for ſtands in need of no rhetorick, or any other imbelliſhment. We want to be happy, and our felicity is to depend upon the wiſdom of our choice: the queſtion is, whether we ſhall be contented with the preſent eſtabliſhment, and the bleſſings, which it is in our power to enjoy under it in peace and tranquillity, or renounce both to go in queſt of an eutopia to be look'd for in a revolution, that in all human probability will never be brought about, and of which the very attempt, whether the thing it ſelf be compaſs'd or not, cannot coſt leſs, if made with any vigor or reſolution, than the ruin of at leaſt half the nation.

LET us compare all the petty grievances and apprehenſions, both real and imaginary, the ſevereſt ſtate-critick can pretend the nation to labour under, to the certain and ſubſtantial calamities, that ever muſt attend national diſcord and civil wars, and after that I leave any rational creature to judge, which of the two is moſt eligible.

I ſhall

I ſhall only exclude thoſe of deſperate fortunes and no principles, that have no ſubſtance, or any proſpect of getting, but when every body loſes, by publick troubles and inteſtine broils: for I have not patience to hear a bravo, who is ready to go upon the high way, complain of the church's danger; or a villain, who would be a falſe evidence for half a crown tell us on the leaſt diſaſter, that the land can expect no bleſſing till the right heir is reſtor'd again.

When we ſhall have carefully examin'd the ſtate of our affairs, and ſo far conquer'd our prejudices as not to ſuffer our ſelves to be deluded any longer by falſe appearances, the proſpect of happineſs will be before us. To expect miniſtries without faults, and courts without vices, is groſly betraying our ignorance of human affairs. Nothing under the ſun is perfect: human life it ſelf is a mixture of good and evil: no mortal can be compleatly happy, and none are ſo miſerable, but they might ſtill be worſe. There is happineſs in knowing the narrow bounds of temporal felicity, and the ſureſt way to content

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is to moderate our deſires. Where ſchiſm divides the people, the heats of parties muſt be troubleſome, and the government will ever find it a difficult task to keep them quiet; but even ſchiſm [a] has its uſes, and orthodoxy it ſelf is not without inconveniencies: but what madneſs is it, that men ſhould chuſe to be wretched, becauſe they cannot be compleatly happy!

THAT we cannot agree in one thing, ought not to be a reaſon to make us diſ-

[a] *The clergy of* England, *by being ſevere upon the* Schiſmaticks, *and upbraiding them with want of learning, have rais'd themſelves ſuch formidable enemies as are not eaſily anſwer'd; and again, the diſſenters by prying into the lives, and diligently watching all the actions of their powerful antagoniſts, render thoſe of the eſtabliſhed church more cautious of giving offence, than in all probability they would be, if they had no malicious overlookers to fear. It is very much owing to the great number of* Hugonots, *that have always been in* France, *till the late extirpation of them, that that kingdom has a leſs diſſolute, and more learned clergy to boaſt of, than any* Roman *catholick country. The clergy of that church are no where more ſovereign than in* Italy, *and therefore no where more debauch'd; nor any where more ignorant than they are in* Spain, *becauſe their doctrine is no where leſs oppos'd.* Fable of the Bees. *p.* 63.

fer

ſet in every thing elſe. Where the government is ſteddy, the clergy of all communions kept in awe, and religious diſputes are prohibited, many ſects may live together in good harmony. When men who have perſecuted others come to labour under the ſame affliction, they find it true what monſieur *Baile* [a] ſays of arguments for perſecution, and in ſome places in *Germany*, people of different religions make uſe of the ſame churches without quarrelling; but where the magiſtrate is remiſs in curbing the licentiouſneſs of divines, the leaſt differences in religion may be the cauſe of endleſs troubles. Of this *Hamburg*, the moſt conſiderable of all the *Hans* towns, is a deplorable inſtance: that great and opulent city has been tore by diviſions, and perplex'd with tumults and inſurrections, for many years, ſuſtain'd vaſt loſſes

[a] *He compares them to the invention of bombs and carcaſſes, and all kind of machines of war. Thoſe that make uſe of them firſt draw great advantages from them, and whilſt they are the ſtrongeſt things go very well with them; but when they are the weakeſt they are deſtroy'd by their own inventions.* Dictionar. in the article Beza.

and other calamities, and at this day labours ſtill under the miſery of civil diſcord, which are altogether owing to, and never had any other cauſe than the unbridled zeal of furious preachers.

THERE will ever be perſecution whilſt there are clergymen, and the laity will not interpoſe, and take the means from them. The ſword of juſtice, and the power of puniſhing, ought never to be divided or truſted into any other hands but the government's. I have hinted at this often, but cannot help touching upon it again in this place, ſince no nation can be happy, where this maxim is not obſerv'd. All magiſtrates in their ſuperiour wiſdom ſhould be fathers to the publick, and the kindeſt behaviour they can ſhew their ſubjects is, what prudent perſons make uſe of to their children. They never ſuffer them to handle any thing that might be hurtful to themſelves or others: ſhould a child cry for a knife, the father rather than indulging him would remove it farther out of his way; and ſhould he be more than ordinary froward, and by his bawling diſturb the family as well as himſelf, the other

ther would think it to be his duty to make him hold his tongue. Clergymen may be overcome by human paſſion, be violent, and rave, whilſt their zeal is hot, but as ſoon as they are cool again, if they have any goodneſs in them, they'll thank us, that we have hindred them from doing miſchief to others, and themſelves too.

THE laity ſhould be ever upon their guard againſt arguments for perſecution: the clergy look upon the bible as their own, and there is hardly a text in it, which moſt divines cannot diſcover a meaning in for their purpoſe. We find in *Geneſis*, that *Sarah* quarrell'd with *Hagar*, and made her leave the houſe, who would think, that this ever ſhould have been made a type of orthodoxy and ſchiſm, and be alledg'd as an apology for perſecution? yet the copious and imaginative mind of St. *Auguſtin* found this ſecret in it. He [a] maintain'd, by *Sarah*'s conduct towards *Hagar*, that the true church might inflict chaſtiſements on the falſe one, exile it, torment it, *&c.* But what-

[a] *See* Baile's *Dictionary in the Article* Agar.

ever is quoted from the Old Teſtament, we may be aſſured from the New, that if it be capable of deſtroying charity and the publick peace, it can never be rightly apply'd; and the laity that have ſuffer'd by civil wars, on religious accounts, may meet with a better text for their purpoſe in the prophet [a] *Hoſea*, than any the clergy can alledge for diſcord or perſecution.

If we are in love with true religion, let every one endeavour to ſubdue his paſſions for the love of GOD, and diligently labour at the amendment of his own life, and never attack others on that ſcore before he has made a conqueſt of himſelf. Whilſt we are neglectful of our own ſouls, we ought ever to ſuſpect our zeal to convert others. *Few men*, ſays a noble [b] author, *are ſo ignorant of human nature, and what they hold in common with their kind as not to comprehend, that where great vehemence is expreſs'd by any one in what relates ſolely to another, 'tis ſeldom without ſome private intereſt of his own.*

a. Hoſea, *chap.* vi. v. 9.
b. *Lord* Shaftsb. Charakteriſt.

BUT

BUT when a man, neglecting all common civilities, ſhews himſelf on all accounts ſpiteful and vexatious to his neighbours, when he hires the mob to break his windows, and rejoice at every misfortune that befals him, how can we believe him ſincere, when he pretends to have a very great concern, and nothing more at heart than his eternal welfare? What can be more impious to GOD, or baſe to men, than to profeſs religious motives for what we plainly feel our ſelves prompted to by envy, ſelf-intereſt, hatred and averſion?

TO promote real goodneſs, and be a happy nation every ſubject ought to aſſiſt the magiſtrate in endeavouring to ſuppreſs vice and immorality, and be chiefly ſollicitous to diſcourage them by his own example; and as on the one hand the audaciouſneſs of fiery pulpiteers ſhould be reſtrain'd, ſo on the other, all ſcurrilous jeſts and witticiſms, that can any ways tend to depreciate the holy function of divines, and render it leſs beneficial to us, ſhould be prohibited under penalties; and here I would include all who diſſent from

us, as well as the orthodox. Firſt to tolerate, and afterwards to ſcoff at a religion, is affronting GOD either the one way or the other: religion, and whatever is ſacred, can never become the proper objects of ridicule.

PROPHANENESS and irreligion above all ſhould be ſeverely puniſhed, and the moſt ſublime wit, if prophane, ſhould never be preferr'd in the ſtate, much leſs in the church, in any part of the king's dominions. Theſe are the ſureſt ways to promote peace and happineſs, at leaſt among the laity; if divines will continue their diſputes, let us not ſuffer our ſelves to be drawn into their quarrels, with this aſſurance, that whoever is guided by a true chriſtian ſpirit, will ever prefer an ounce of peace to a pound of victory.

WHEN we have left off all religious debates, and conquer'd the over-officious concern we have for other mens conſciences, it would be another happineſs, if we could cure our ſelves of a piece of pride, which is often the occaſion of a vaſt deal of folly. Some men only belong to a party, becauſe they would look upon themſelves as

as inconſiderable without it; it furniſhes them indeed with frequent opportunities of ſhewing their wit, honour, ſteddineſs, intelligence, and reading, which they know not where to look for any where elſe; but then often it cauſes them a thouſand diſquiets for nothing: an argument begun in jeſt, if warmly maintain'd, becomes earneſt, and trifling diſputes daily produce ſubſtantial enmities. I could excuſe a man, who chuſes a ſide, and ſtands up for it with obſtinacy to oblige his cuſtomers, his relations, or a friend, whom he has ſome expectation from; but it is unpardonable, that a man ſhould be ſerious and vehement to maintain a cauſe, which in the firſt place he is conſcious he knows nothing of, in the ſecond is ſure he never can, or ſo much as propoſes to get any thing by, in behalf of others, whom he never was acquainted with, and often never ſaw or heard ſpoke of, but with the utmoſt partiality, and ſuch as deſpiſe him, and would not dirty their ſhoes to ſave him from hanging, unleſs they were paid for it. Could we leave ſtateſmen to fight their own battles, and prove their own vir-

virtues and good qualities, abundance of miſchief might be prevented. Men have had their heads broke for defending the honeſty of a courtier, who at the ſame time was a-bed with another man's wife, or bribing, over a bottle of *Champaign*, another miniſter who was to audit his accompts.

THE laſt I ſhall ſpeak of, as a thing, deſirable for our happineſs, is to have both the will and capacity of diſtinguiſhing between the evils that befal us from the faults of others, and thoſe we ſuffer on the ſcore of our own. Some are beggar'd by cards or dice; ſome by cocks or horſes; the ſubſtance of others is melted away in wine and debauchery: the ſpend-thrift is undone at *Bath*, the miſer in *Change-Alley*, and many, not remarkably vicious, that yet for want of application to buſineſs, and following it with that induſtry and vigilance their callings require, can never thrive in the world, are ruin'd by ſloth, ſupineneſs or indolence. Theſe are generally the men who complain moſt of miſmanagements in publick affairs, and by their conſtant murmurs againſt miniſtries

ſtries and governments, keep off the chagreen they would feel, ſhould they reflect on the real cauſe of their misfortunes. If theſe were ſet aſide, the nation would be eas'd of a vaſt multitude of complaints.

FROM what has been ſaid, it is manifeſt, that on the one hand the greateſt part of our complaints are frivolous and unreaſonable; that on the other, for grievances more real, we have remedies of great efficacy, if we would make uſe of them, and conſequently, that it is our own faults, if, in the fruition of ſo many native bleſſings, we enjoy not as much happineſs as the condition of mortals is ſuſceptible of.

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